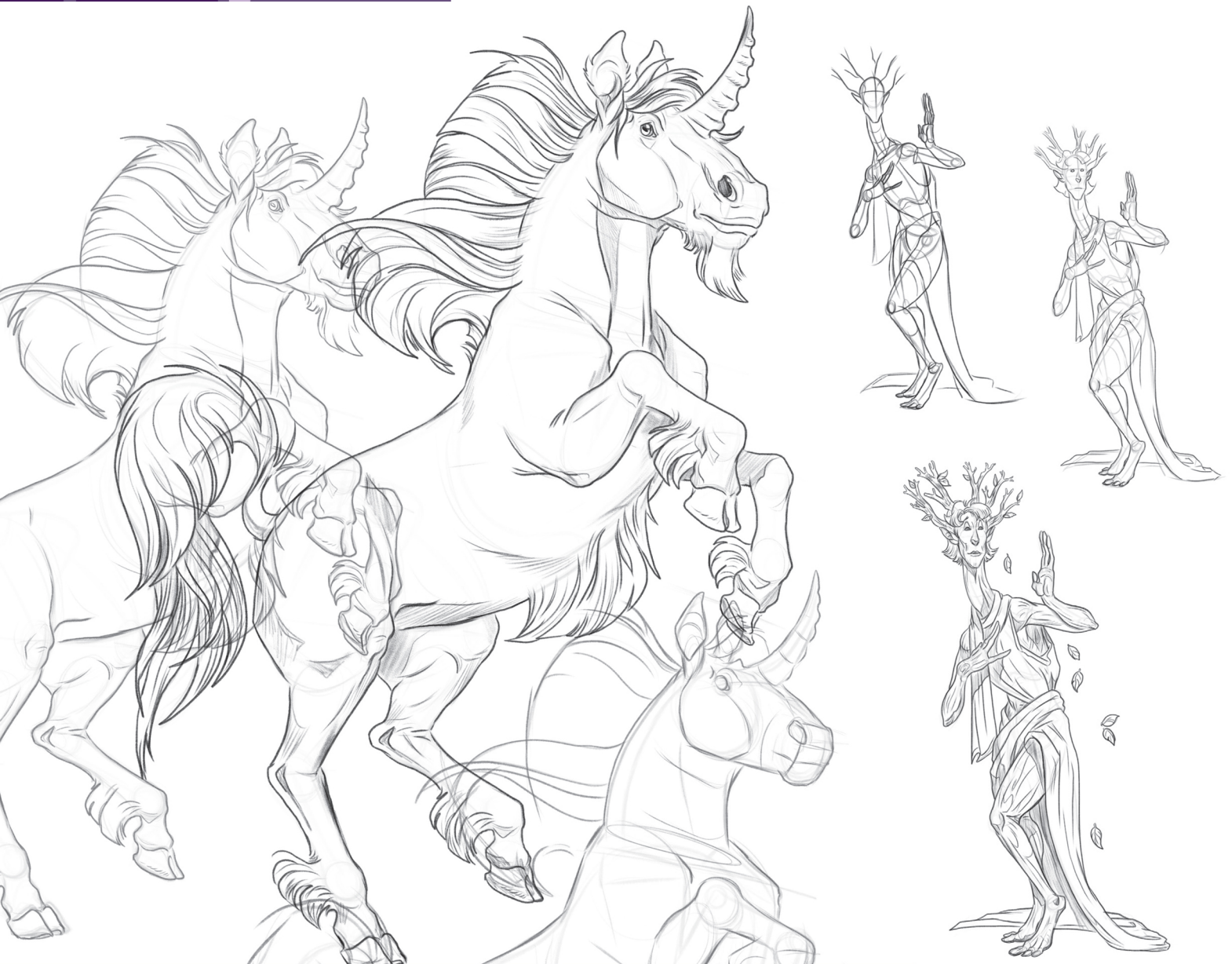


DRAW LIKE
AN ARTIST

100 FANTASY CREATURES & CHARACTERS

STEP-BY-STEP REALISTIC LINE DRAWING



A SOURCEBOOK FOR ASPIRING ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS

BRYNN METHENEY

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Step-by-Step Realistic Line Drawing

A Sourcebook for Aspiring Artists and Designers

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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Fantasy is where imagination and study meet to make something new. In this book, you'll find a wide array of creatures and characters that combine real animals and observed subjects from our own world and twist them into the fantastical.

Suggested Materials

- Graphite pencil
- Any paper that you enjoy working on; I like marker paper or vellum
- Eraser

Start with Wireframes

Wireframes are simplified skeletons or fancy stick figures. If you can imagine making your creature or character out of sticks or lines, you can make a wireframe! I use wireframes to help with modeling my creatures, especially those with complex poses. The wireframes help me visualize the pose without worrying about detail. Keep this step lightweight in your pencil pressure; we want this to be a construction line under our drawing later. With vellum and marker paper, you can layer pages to complete each step.

In the gryphon example, I start by mapping out different body parts with ovals, spheres, and lines to construct a simple skeleton.



STEP 1

Use Planar Shapes to Describe Body Forms

Draw big body shapes such as joints and landmarks. Draw through your forms and keep it simple—no details yet! This stage is important to figure out your character's volume and shape. Notice how the wireframe helps you find the different points of the body, such as knees, elbows, and the ribcage. Flesh out the planar shapes using cylinders, spheres, and contour lines. You can see the gryphon's general structure begin to take shape!



STEP 2

Find Features

As you work into step 3 of drawing your character, you can begin to find features such as eyes, horns, ears, and noses. It's important to work from general to specific when you draw these creatures. This stage serves as the transition. From here on, you'll be finding more details. I've drawn in the eyes and teeth of the gryphon as well as the arm feathers and details around the body.

Dive into Details

Now that we've got our features mapped out, we can start to find the finer details in the character. Things such as wrinkles, scales, more facial features, and expression can be explored in step 4. In this example, you can see the gryphon's wings start to take more shape, too. I detailed the feet with the paw pads and added more to the scales and claws on the front paws.

Refine Detail

Step 5 is where the creature starts to look finalized. Here you can see the gryphon has pupils and more of an expression on its face. The smallest details such as whiskers, scales on the front paws, and facial markings have also been drawn in at this step. This would be the time to clean up your drawing, erasing any pencil lines that you don't want.

Finish the Character

Now that we've got everything drawn, we can add the final details and a bit of value to make the image easier to read and to give some volume to our forms. I use a bit of pencil tone on the image to help describe its form as shadows fall over the gryphon's body. Step 6 is all about polishing and making the image look the way you want by adding small adjustments.

If you're new to drawing, it's important to remember that practice is your ally. Practice these drawings as much as possible, and you'll be able to apply these rules to anything and everything you draw. Remember to be patient and stay the course. It's about persistence.



STEP 3



STEP 4



STEP 5



STEP 6

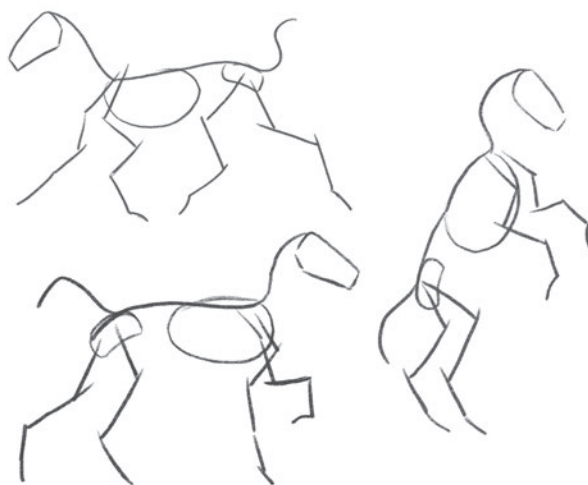
TIPS FOR PENCIL WORK

Using these tips will help you gain better control with your tools as you practice drawing these characters.

TIP #1: DRAW LIGHTLY, BUT WITH PURPOSE

As you draw, keep your pencil light in your hand. We want the first few drawings of our characters to feel alive and fluid. If you put too much pressure on your pencil, your drawings will feel stiff and heavy. This heaviness can be a challenge to work into the final drawing and to erase later on in your process. Keep it light!

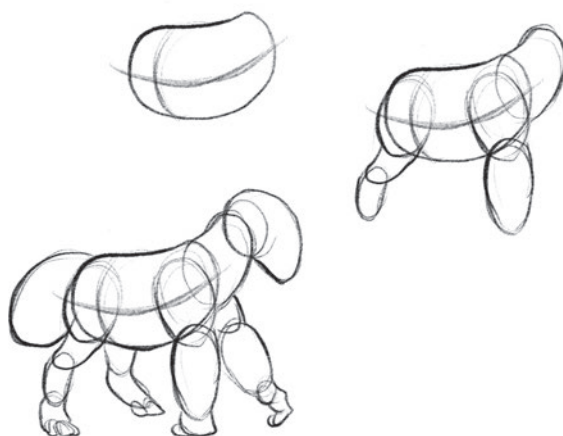
EXERCISE. On a sheet of scrap paper, lightly draw lots of little wireframes of your favorite animal. Keep each wireframe under one minute to keep yourself moving quickly. You're not trying to make good drawings; you're learning to get used to the feeling of holding your pencil lightly enough to keep the gestures fluid and workable.



TIP #2: DRAW THROUGH FORMS

This tip is one that I've learned in studying animators and their work. The reason their drawings feel as though they have so much weight is because they're drawing *through* their characters' forms. When you stop your pencil stroke to avoid a line, there's a hesitation that can be seen in the energy and volume of the character. Drawing through your forms can help you nail a pose or a shape because you're able to keep the energy of the stroke intact as you finish the piece of the character on which you're working.

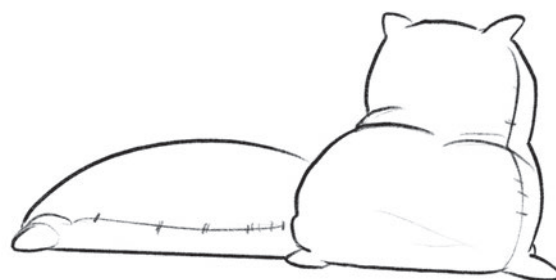
EXERCISE. Draw a cylinder to represent an imaginary animal's body. Working directly on that drawing, draw legs and a neck and then a head. Keep all these body parts simple. Notice how you may want to avoid the line you've already drawn, but don't. Draw through it! Using these simple shapes can help you map out your drawing and give your creature volume and shape. Continue to keep your pencil light.



TIP #3: LET GRAVITY TAKE OVER

I like to make drawings that feel as though gravity is pulling on them. It's important to think about your character's weight while you're drawing it. If the character is large, it will be heavier, which will affect its posture and pose.

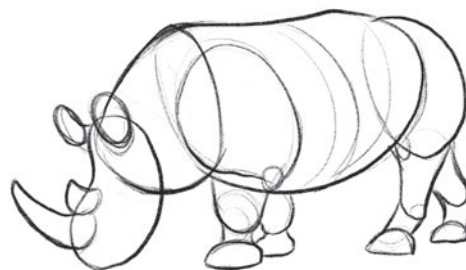
EXERCISE. Take a pillow or sack of rice and prop it up in different positions. Studying objects that change shape under the influence of gravity is a great way to see how you can apply it to a character and in other areas of your art.



TIP #4: BREAK ANIMALS DOWN INTO SHAPES

Photographs are a great way to study animals' unique shapes and details. You can break the animal's body down into big muscle groups as seen in steps 2 and 3 throughout this book. Breaking animal bodies into simple shapes can help us determine the actual shapes they're made of and produce a more accurate study.

EXERCISE. Find a photograph of an animal and trace over it, or redraw the animal using planar shapes. You can also use simple 3D shapes such as ovoids, spheres, cubes, and cylinders to build your animal. This will help tremendously when drawing animals, humans, characters, and everything in between.



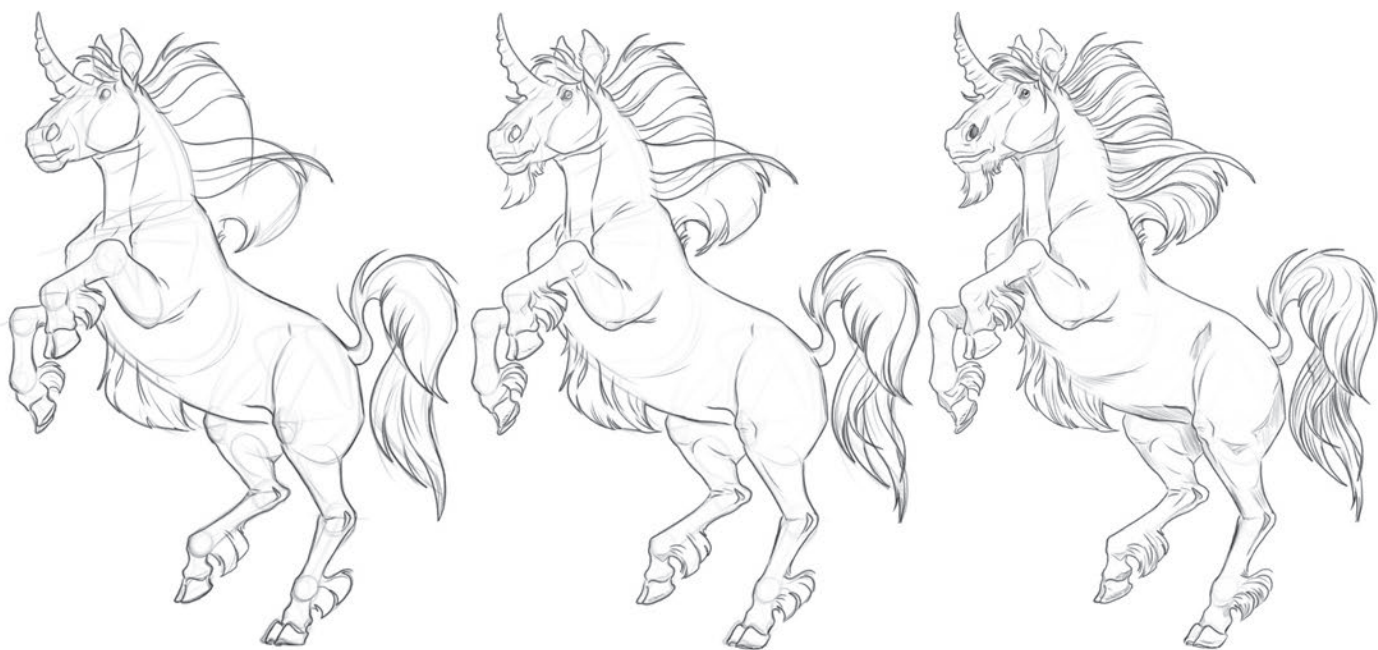
TIP #5: REFERENCE REAL LIFE

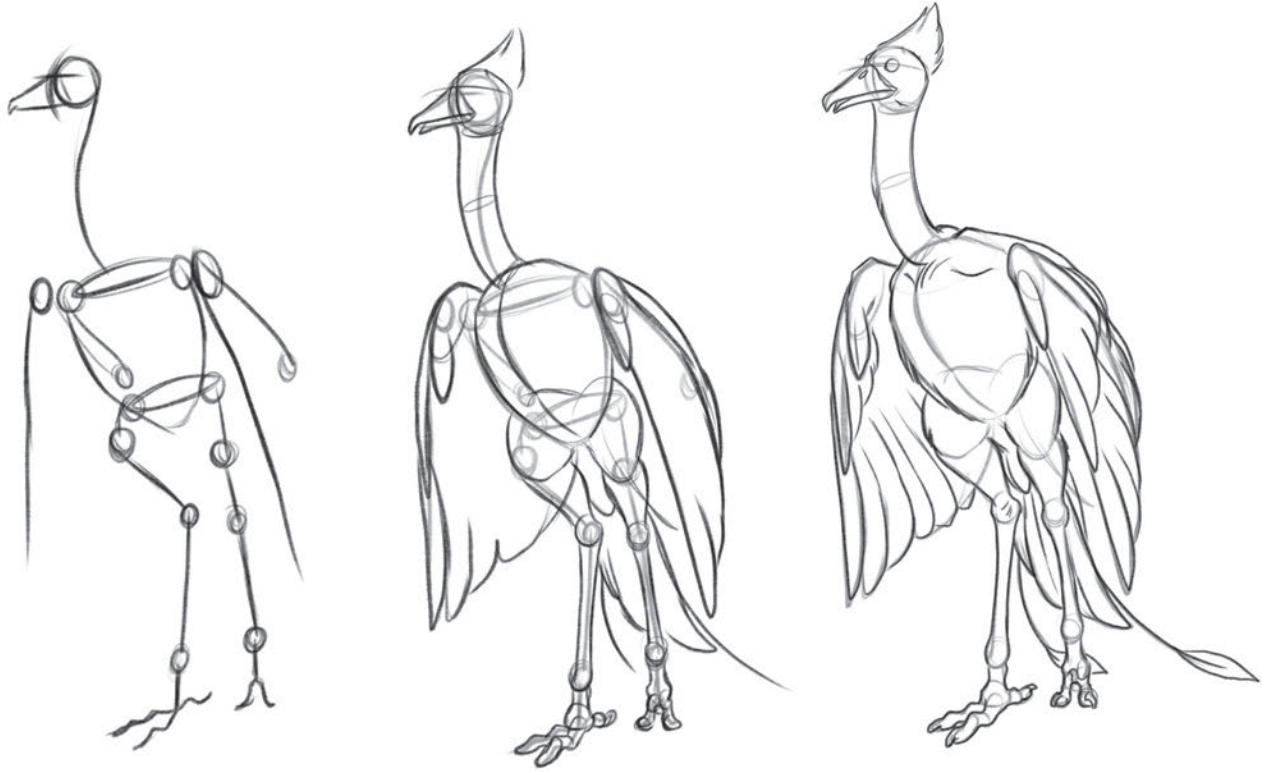
The best way to get ideas for creature design is to look at nature. Animals here on Earth have unique adaptations and characteristics that enable them to survive in harsh places. Looking to them for ideas and for reference can be a huge advantage in making your artwork better. Details such as wrinkles, eyelashes, scales, and texture can help make your fantasy creature feel realistic.

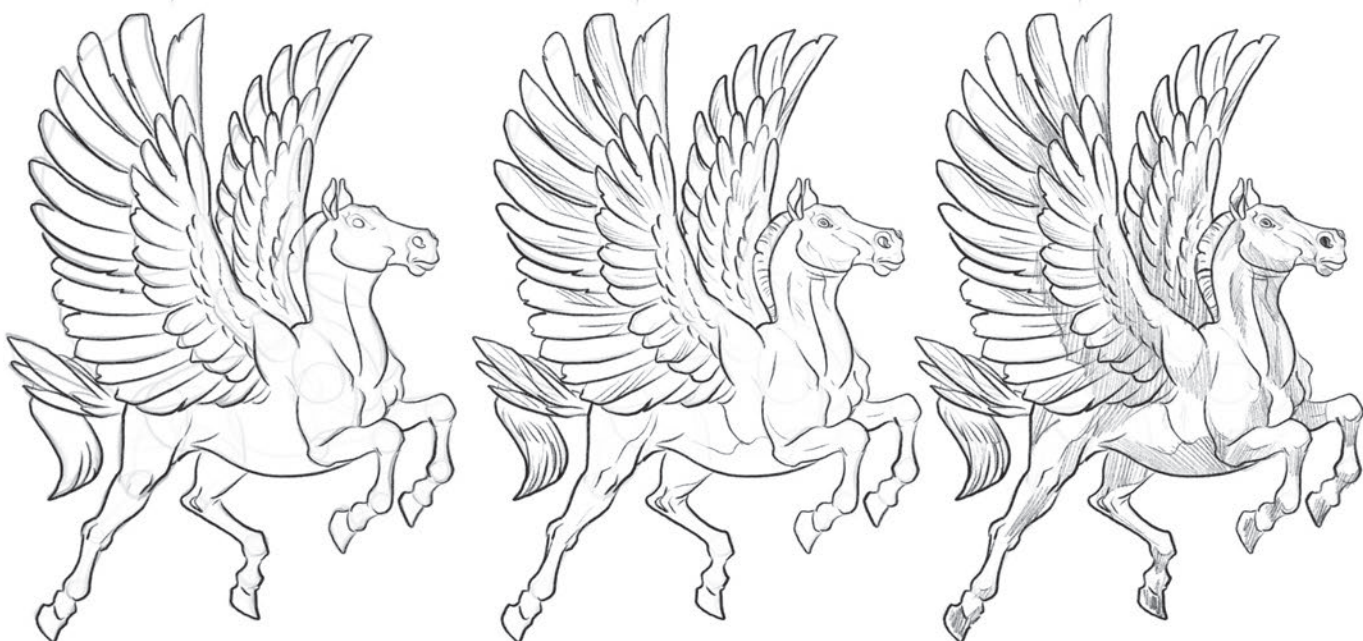
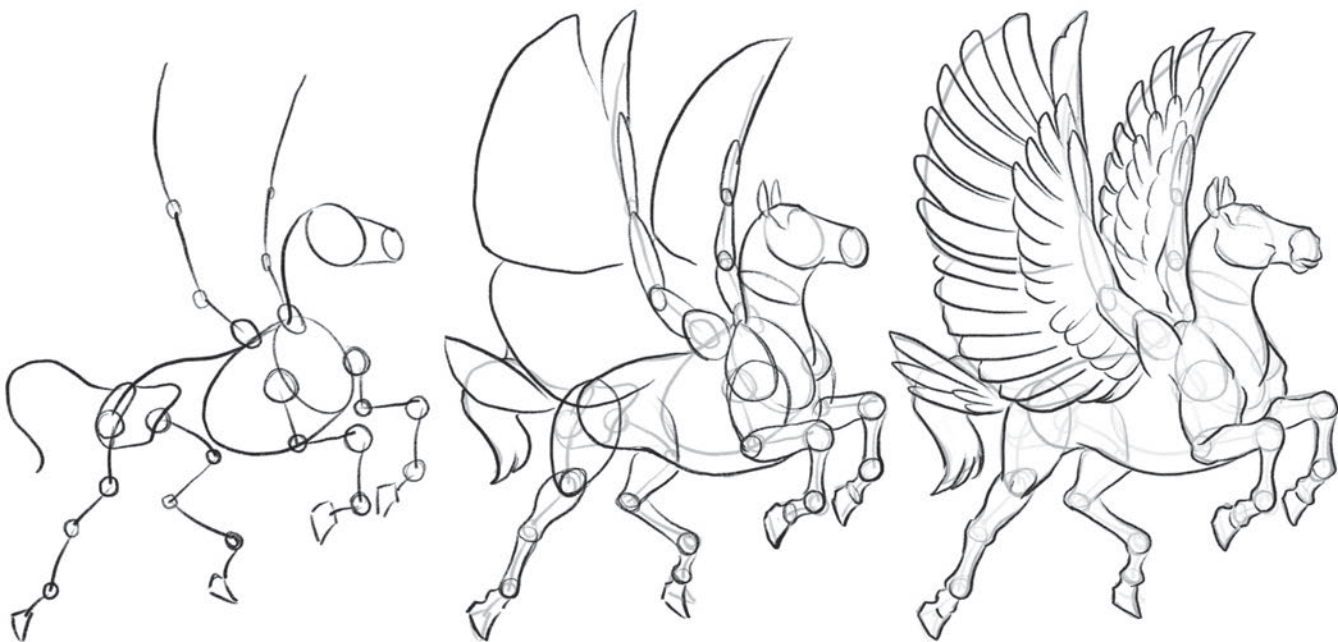
EXERCISE. Draw animals from life (at the zoo or a farm) and from photographs. Do your best to really look at the subject and study the images as you draw them. Using the simple shapes from Tip #4 will help you nail down the shapes first, and then you can move into finding details and specifics. Literally drawing over the simple shapes from Tip #4, find the specific details that make the animal recognizable.

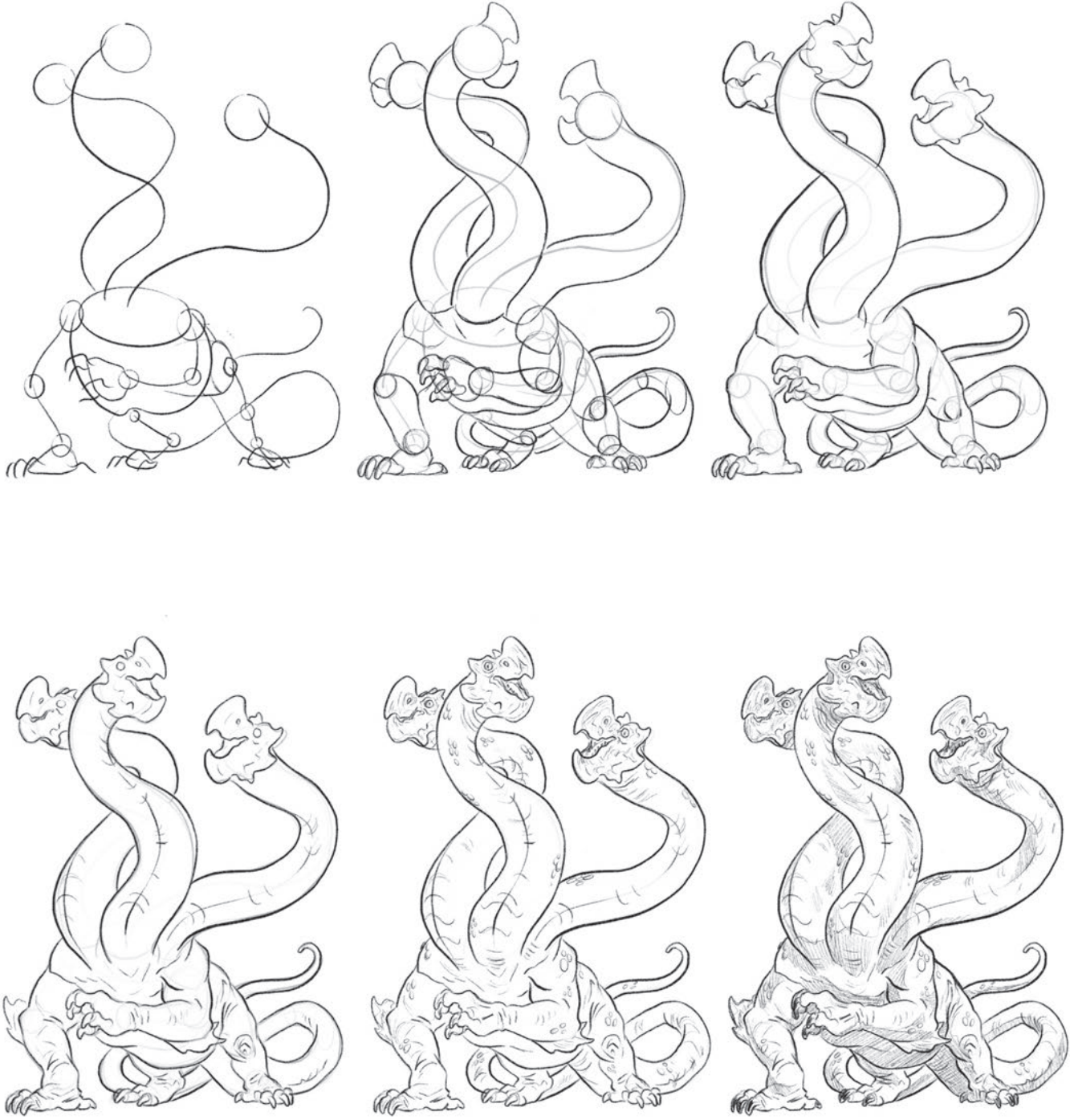


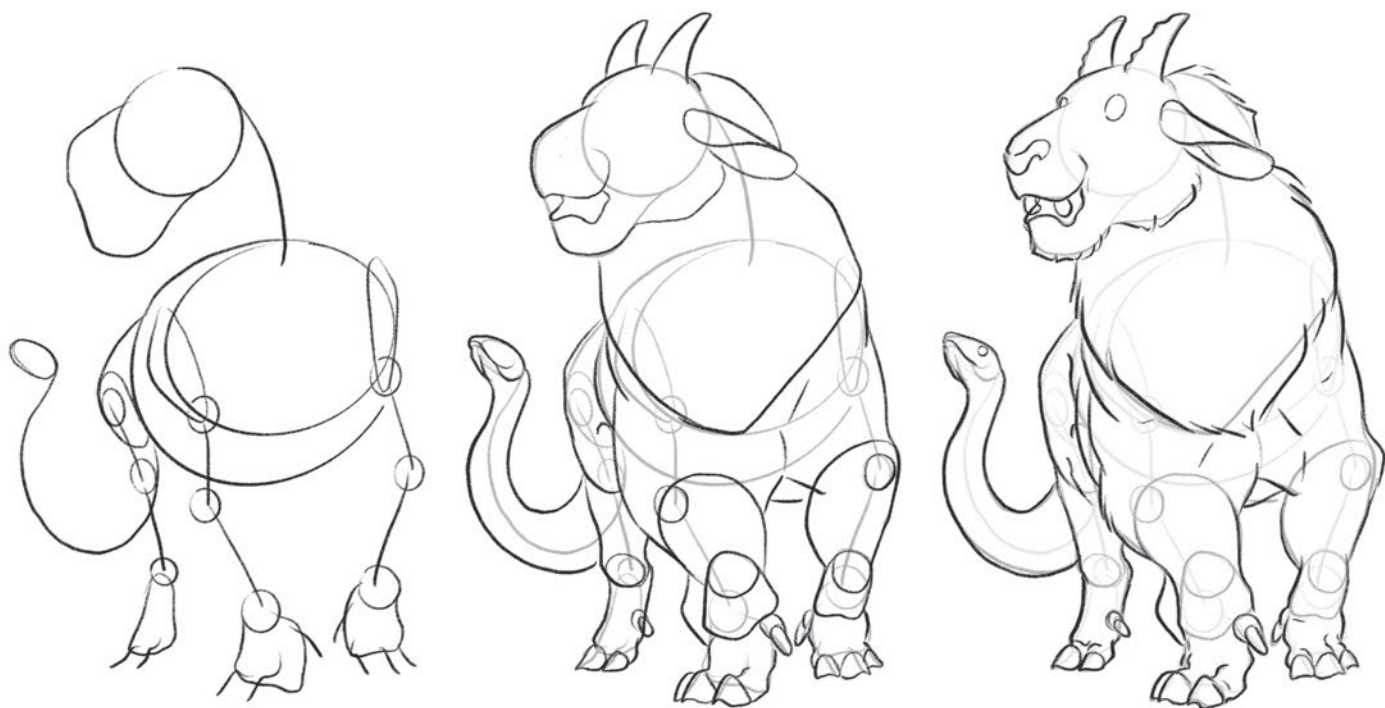


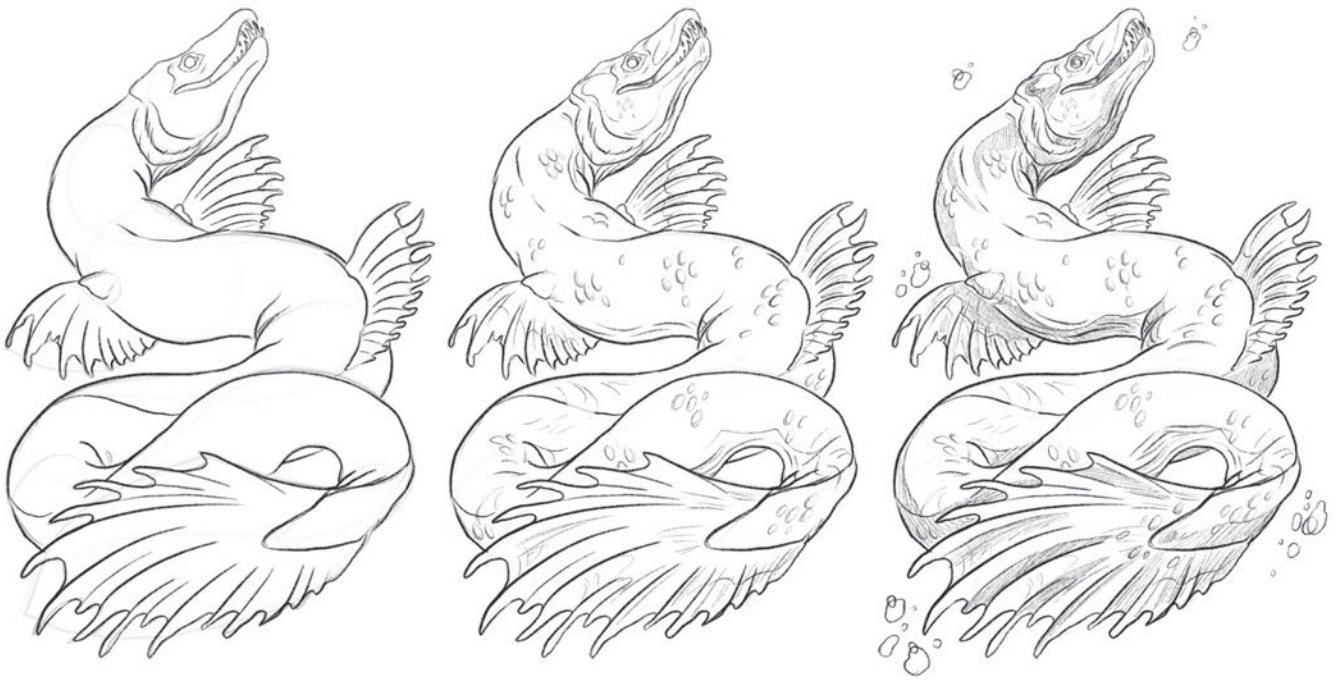
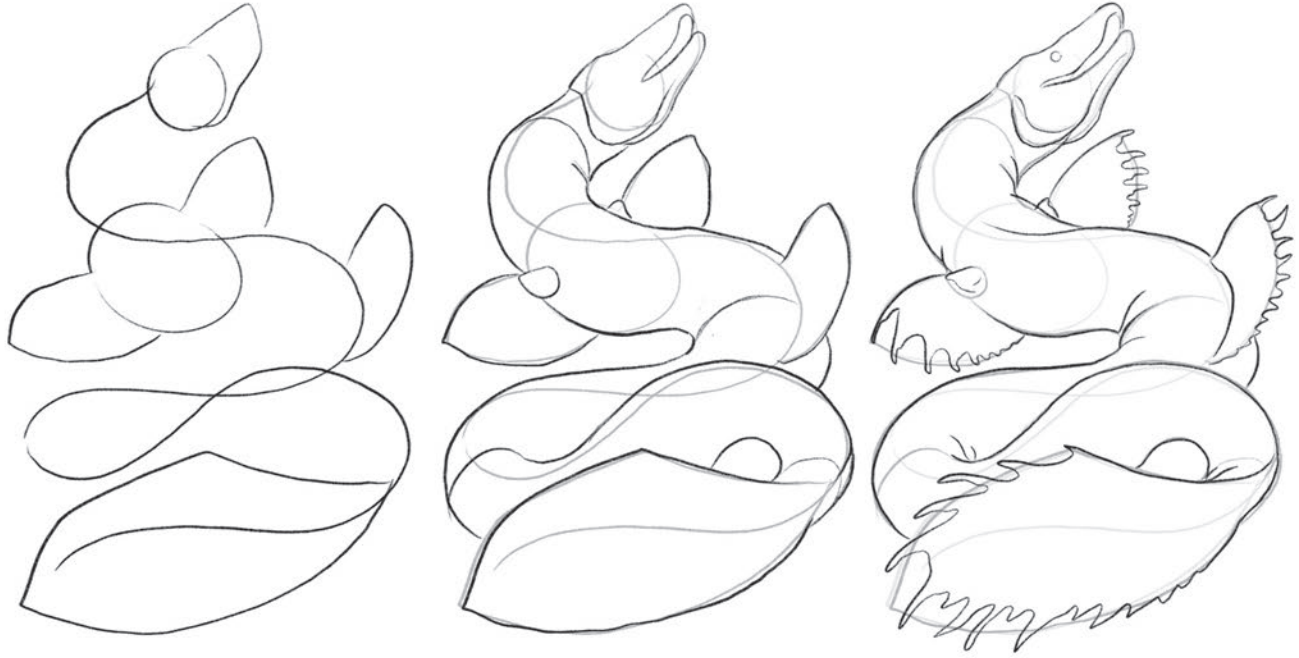


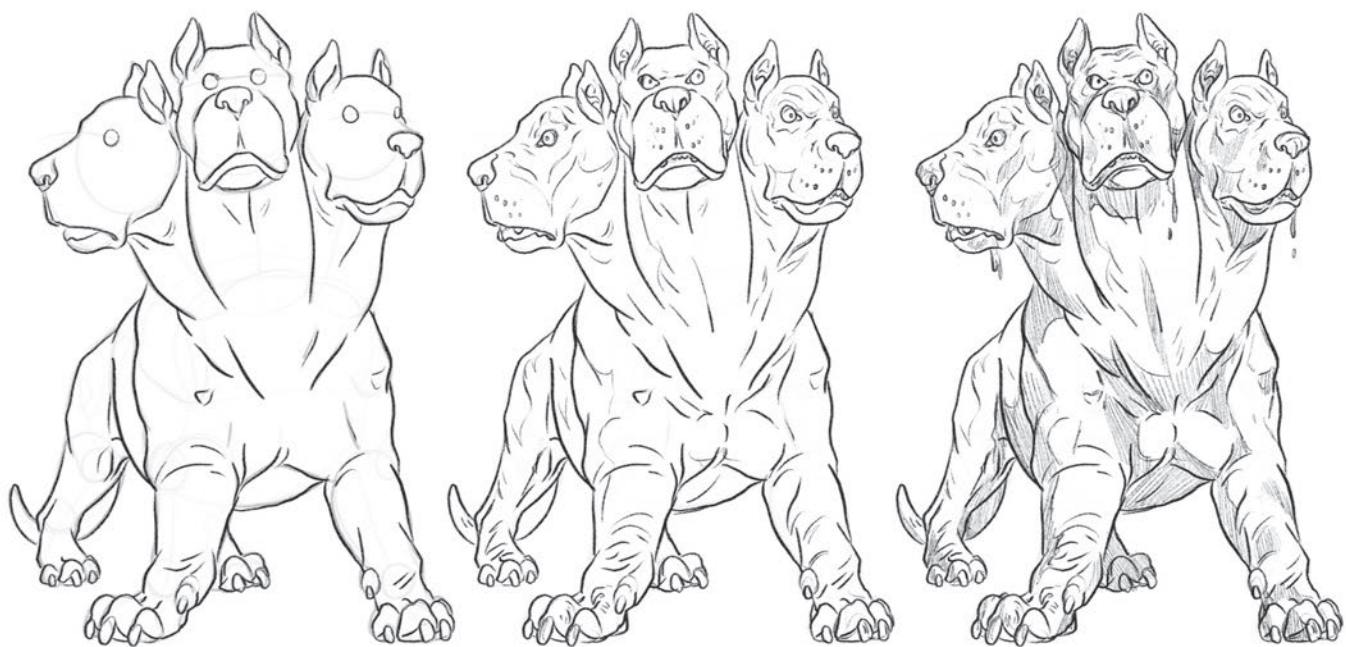




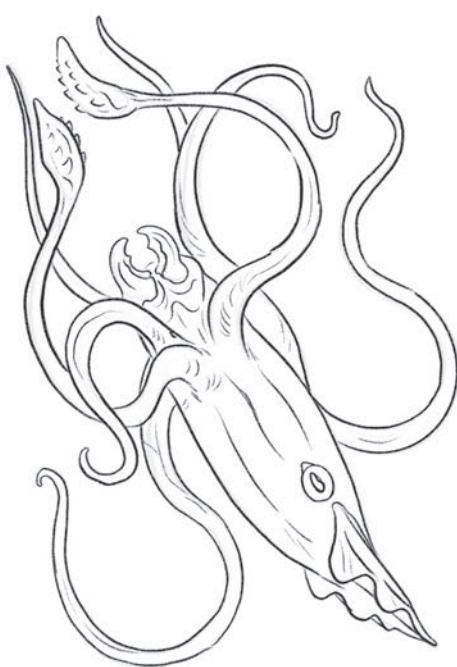
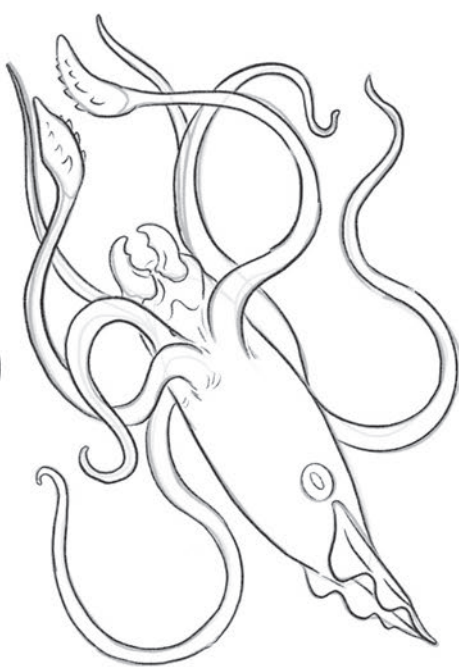
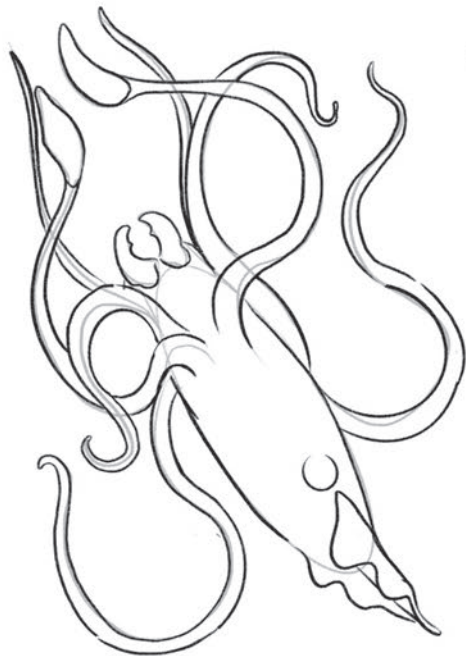


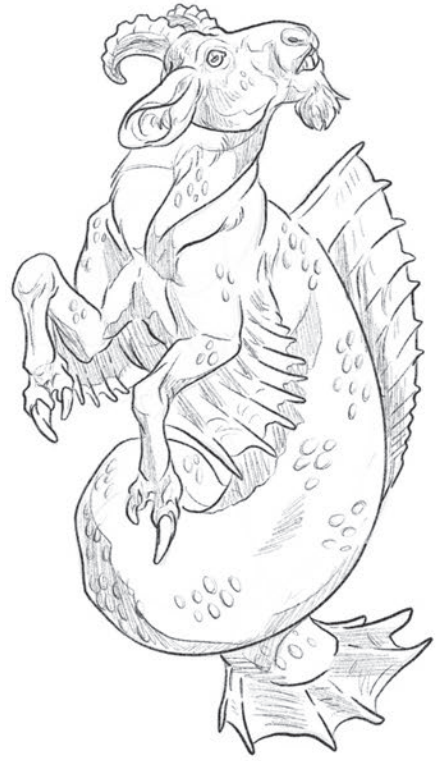
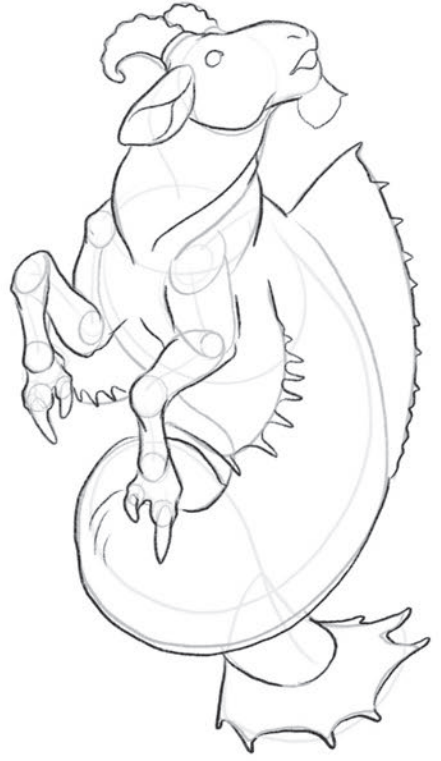
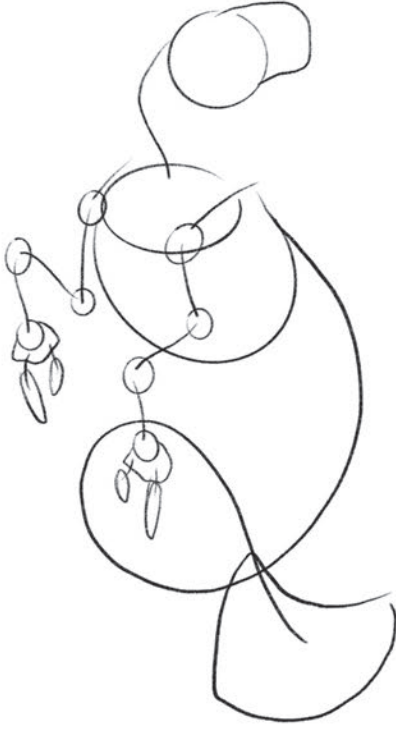




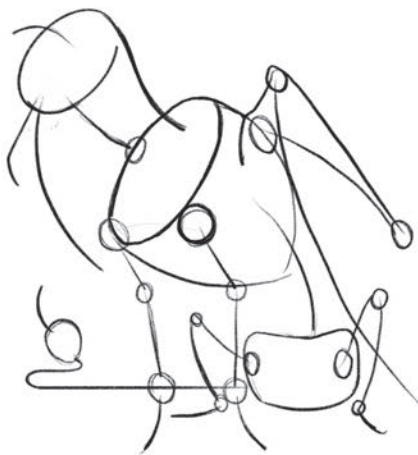


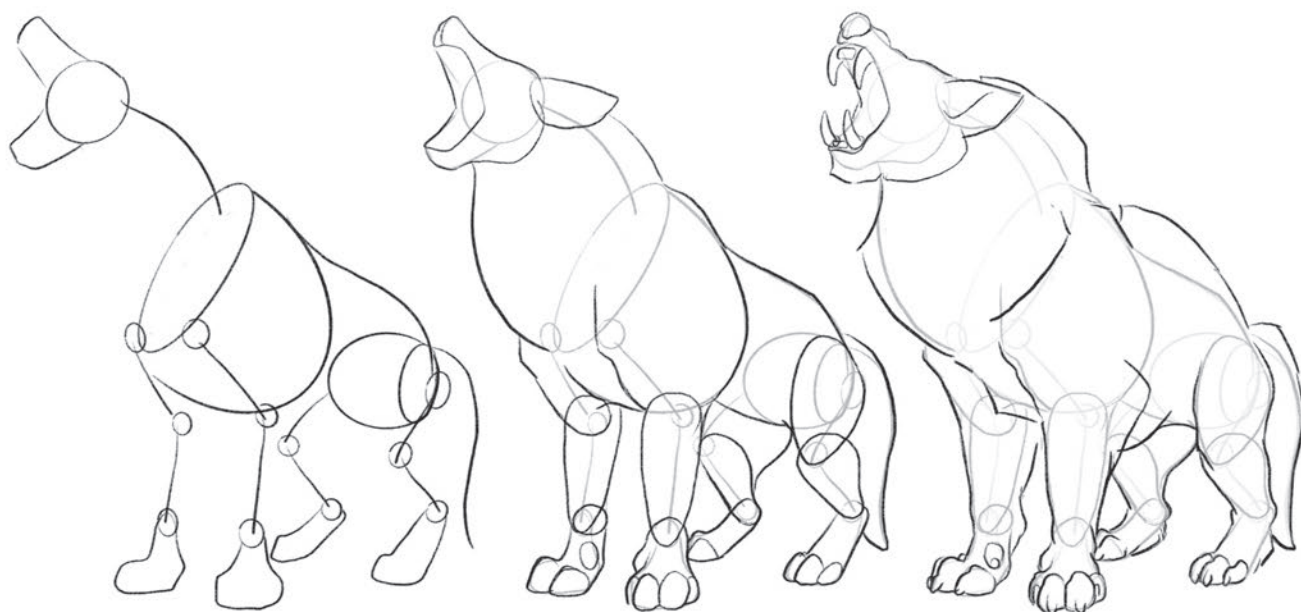




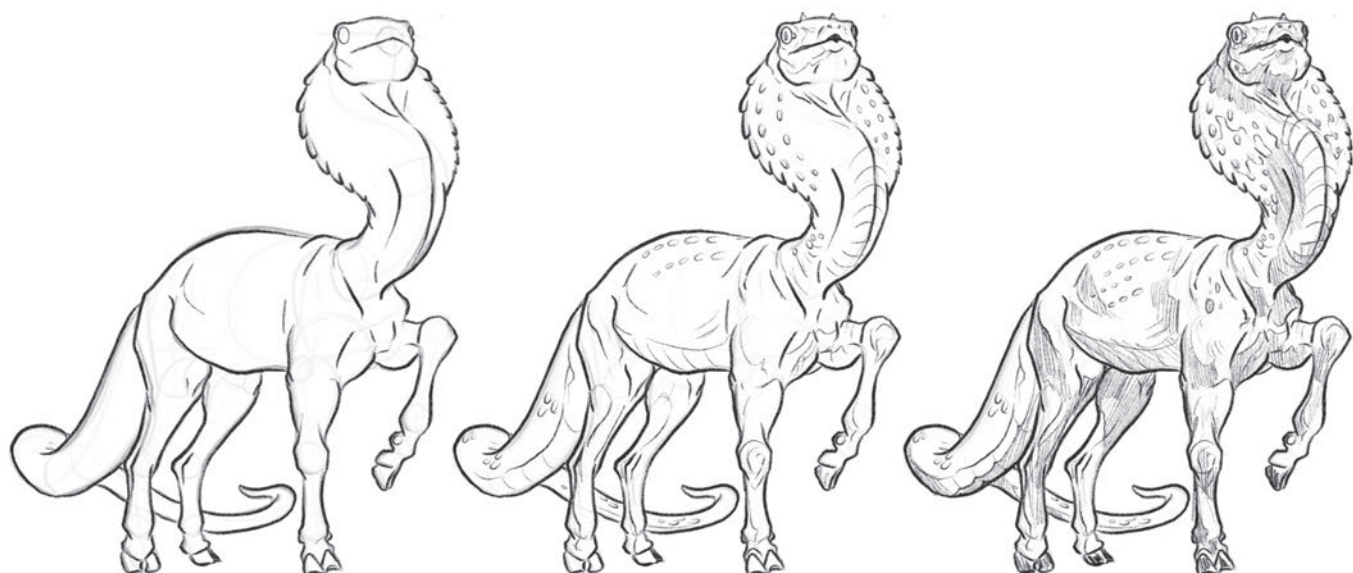
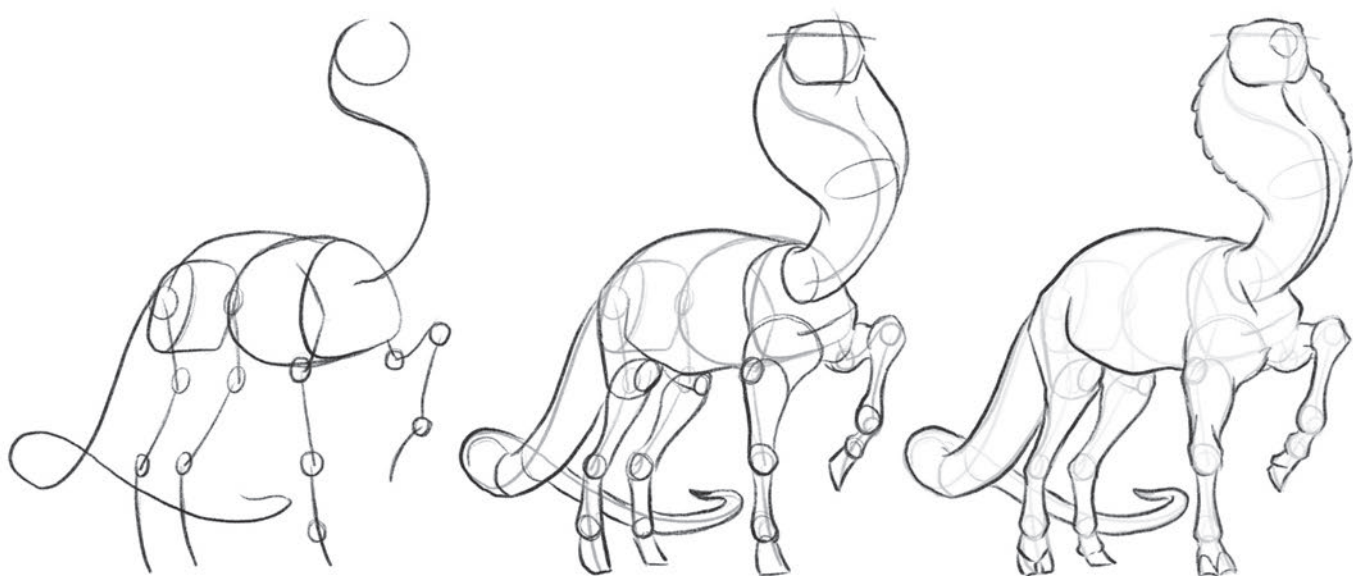


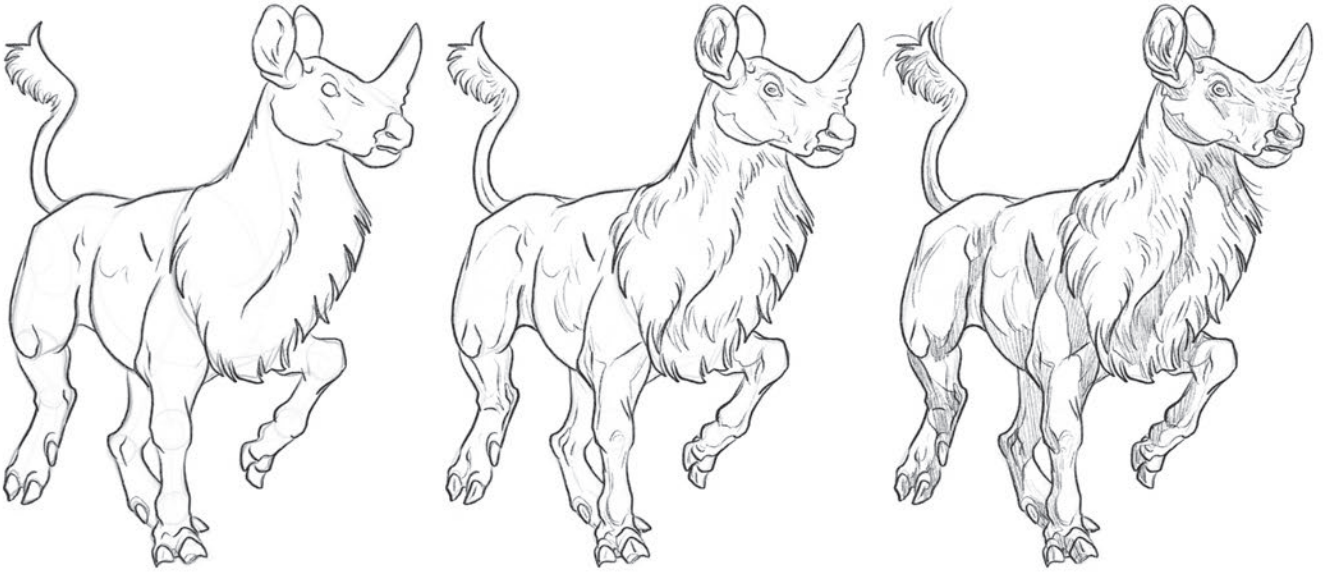
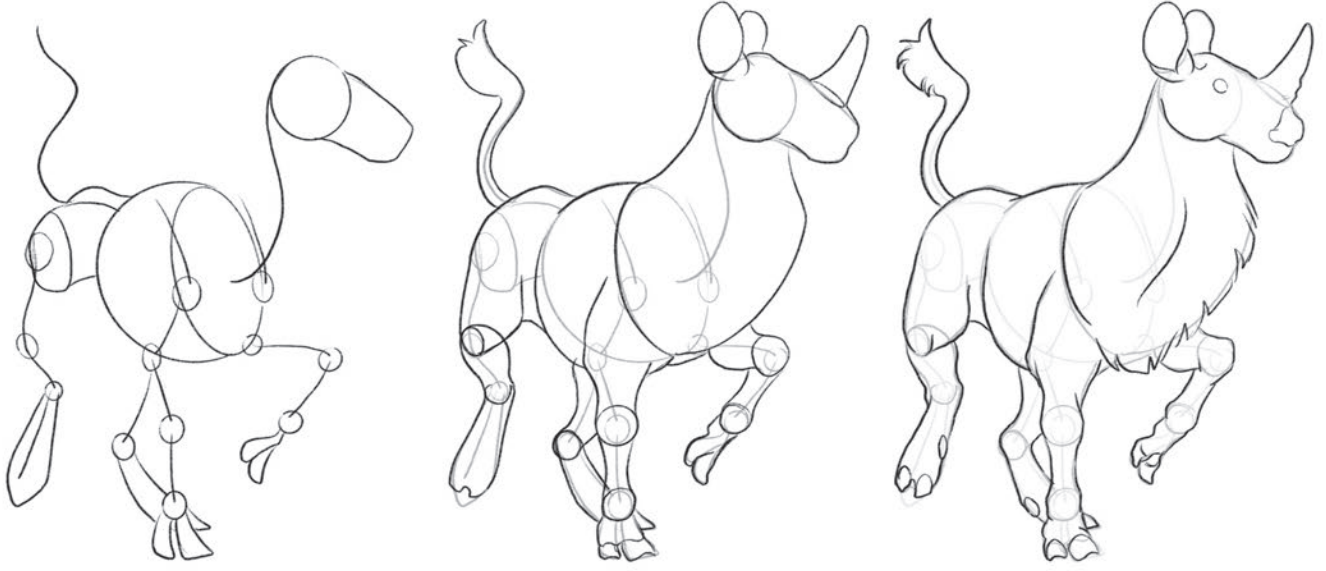


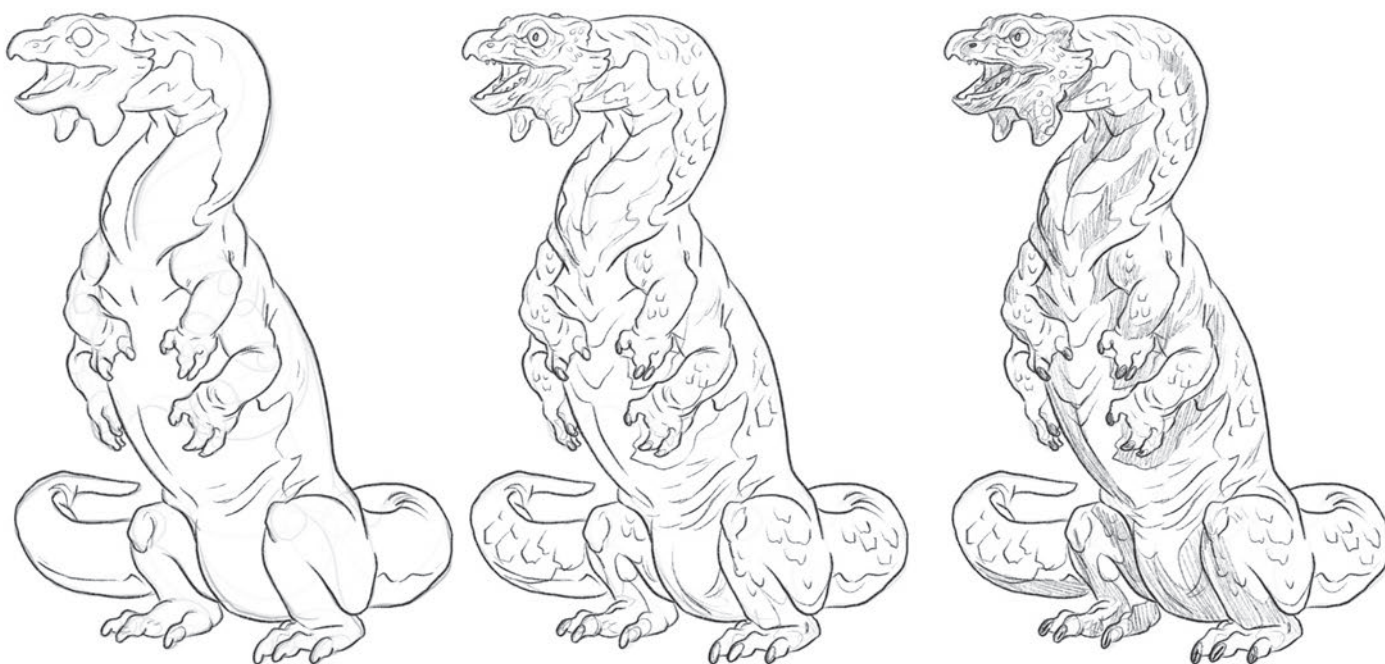
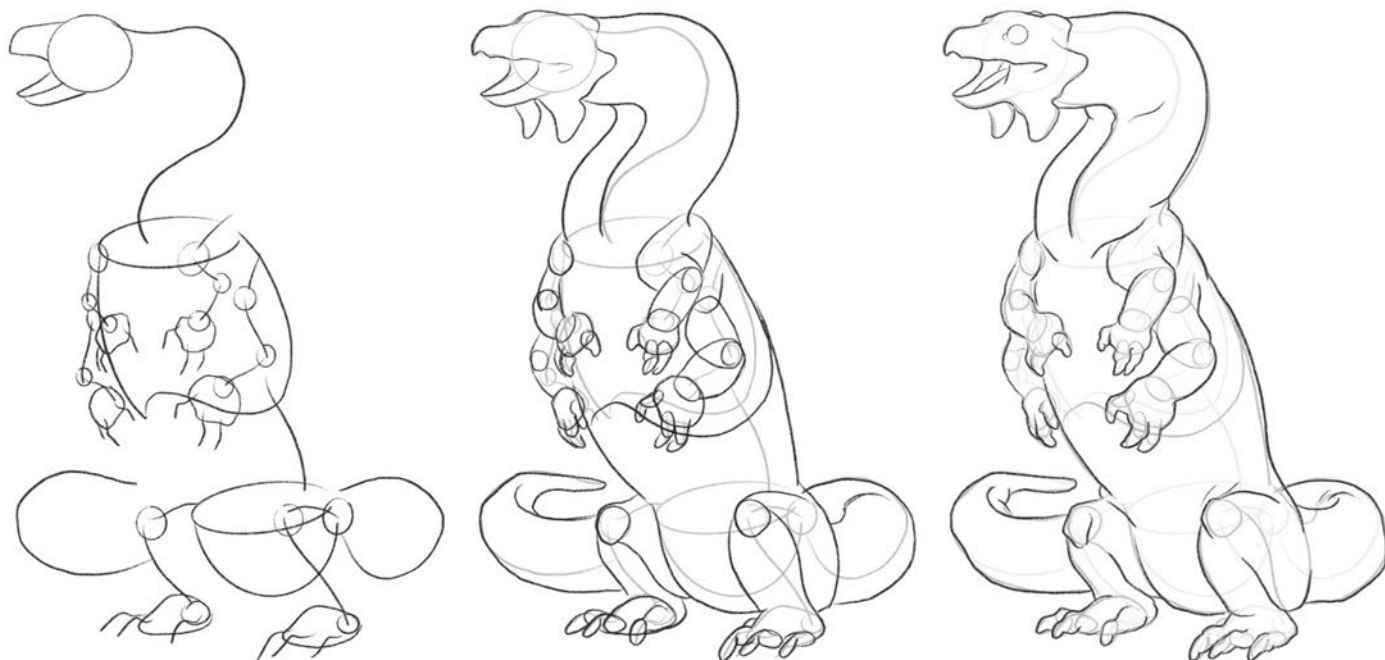


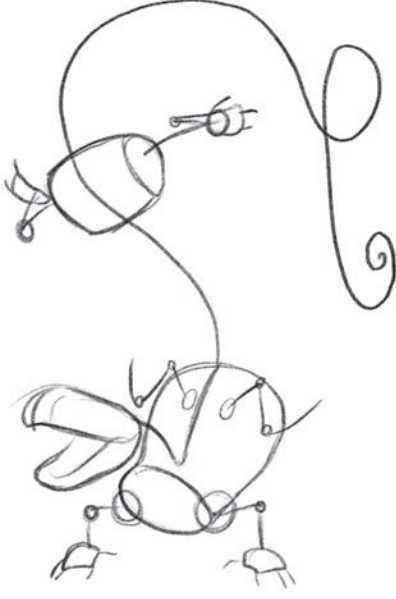


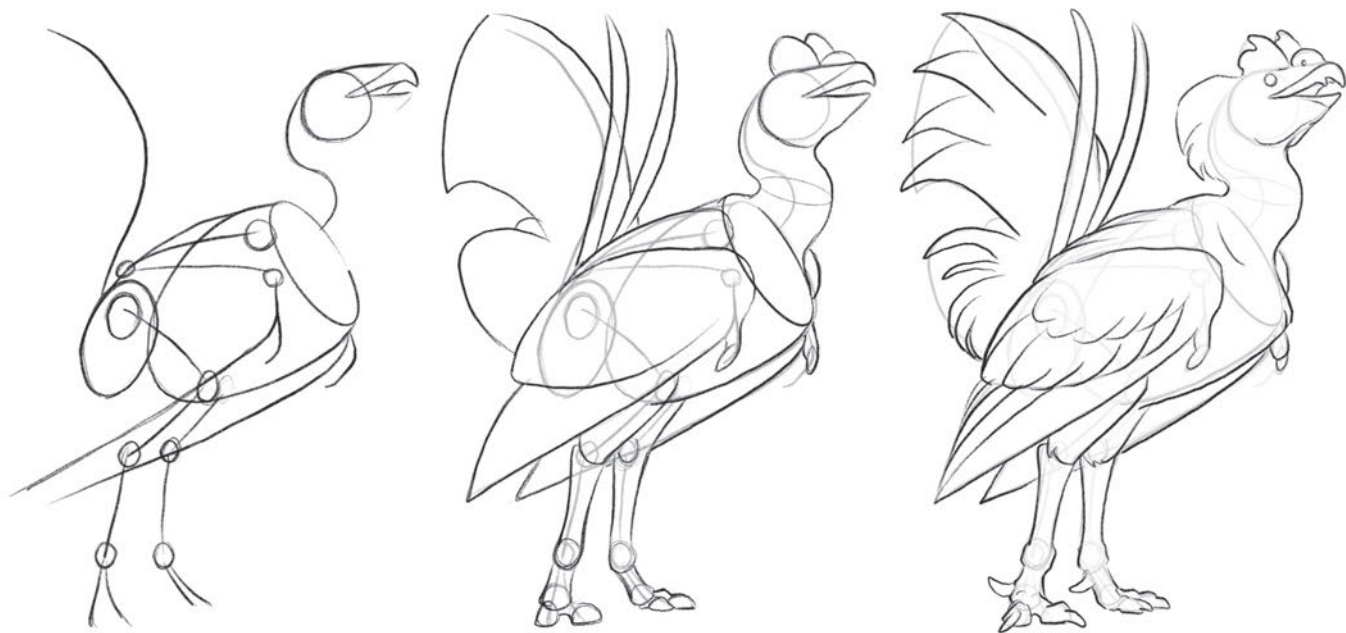


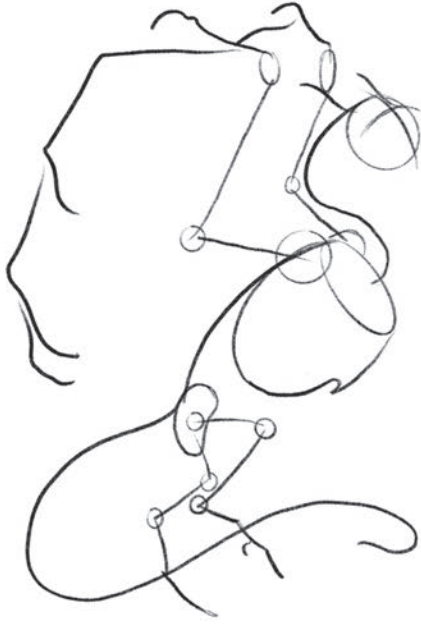


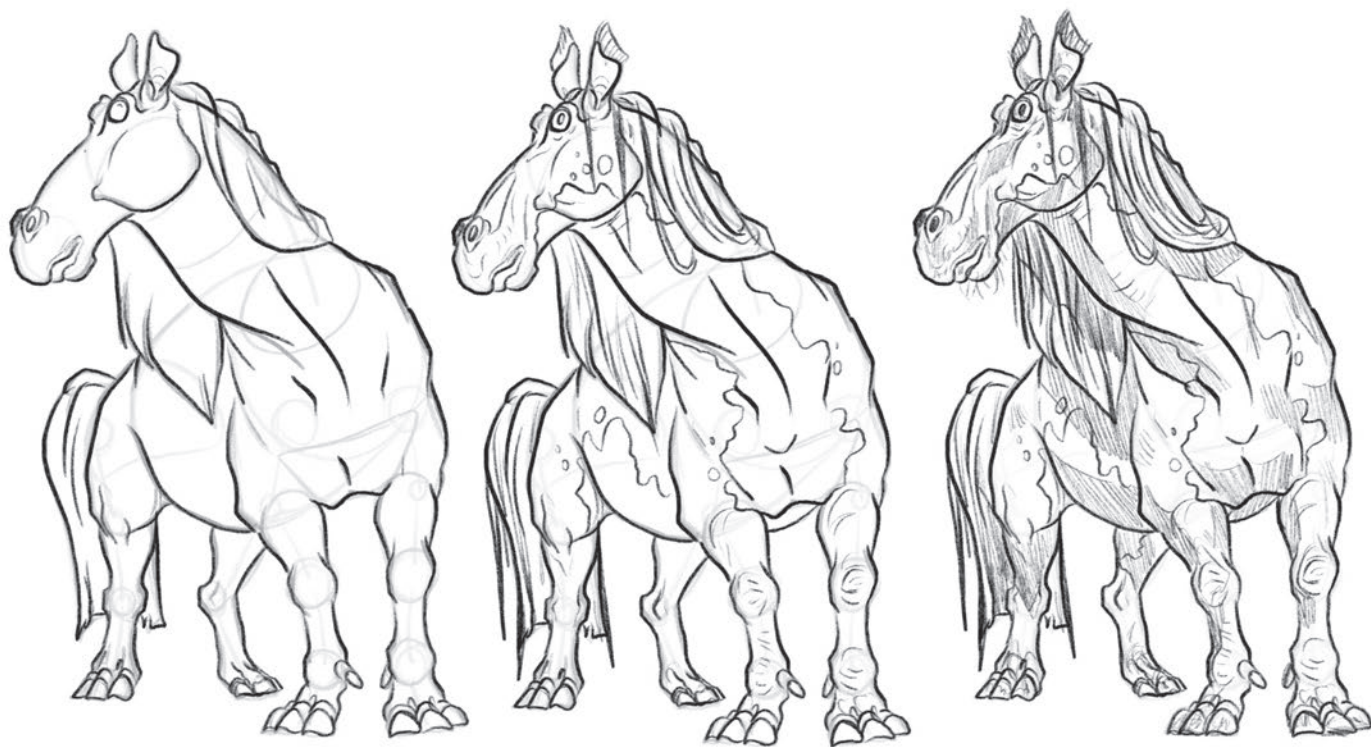
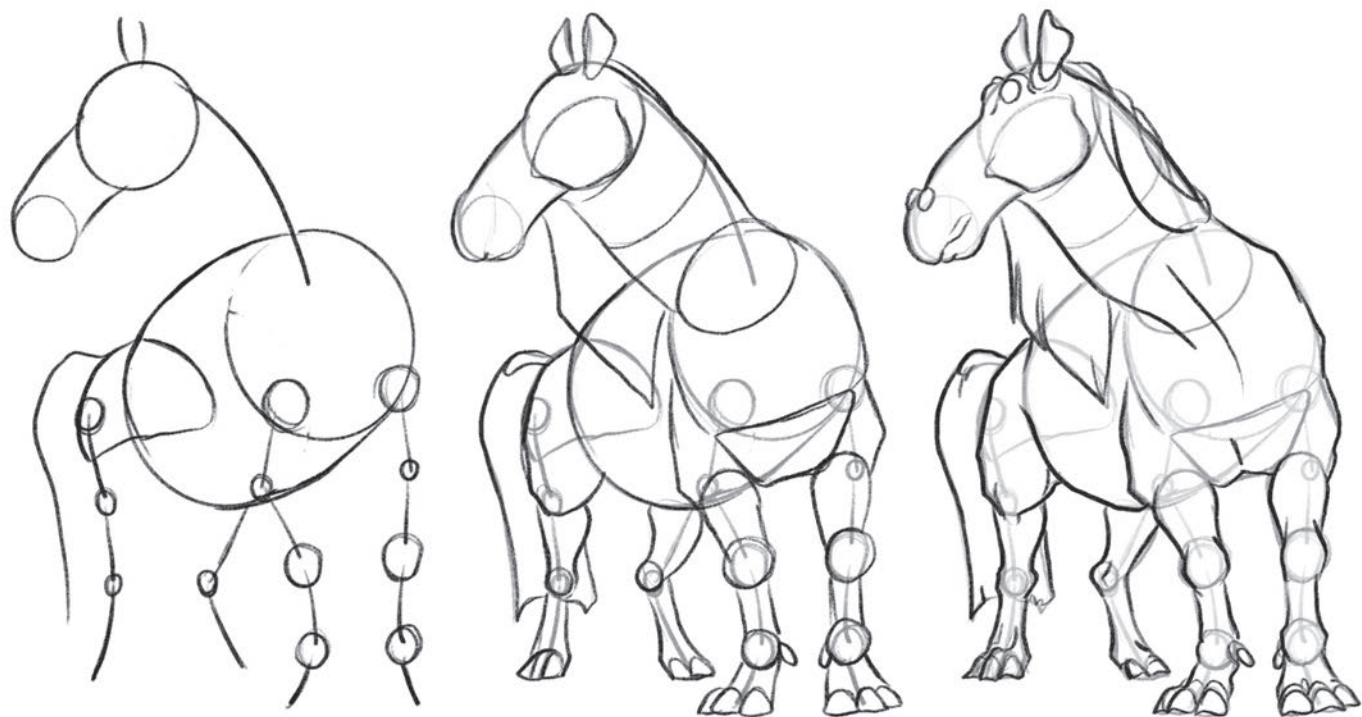


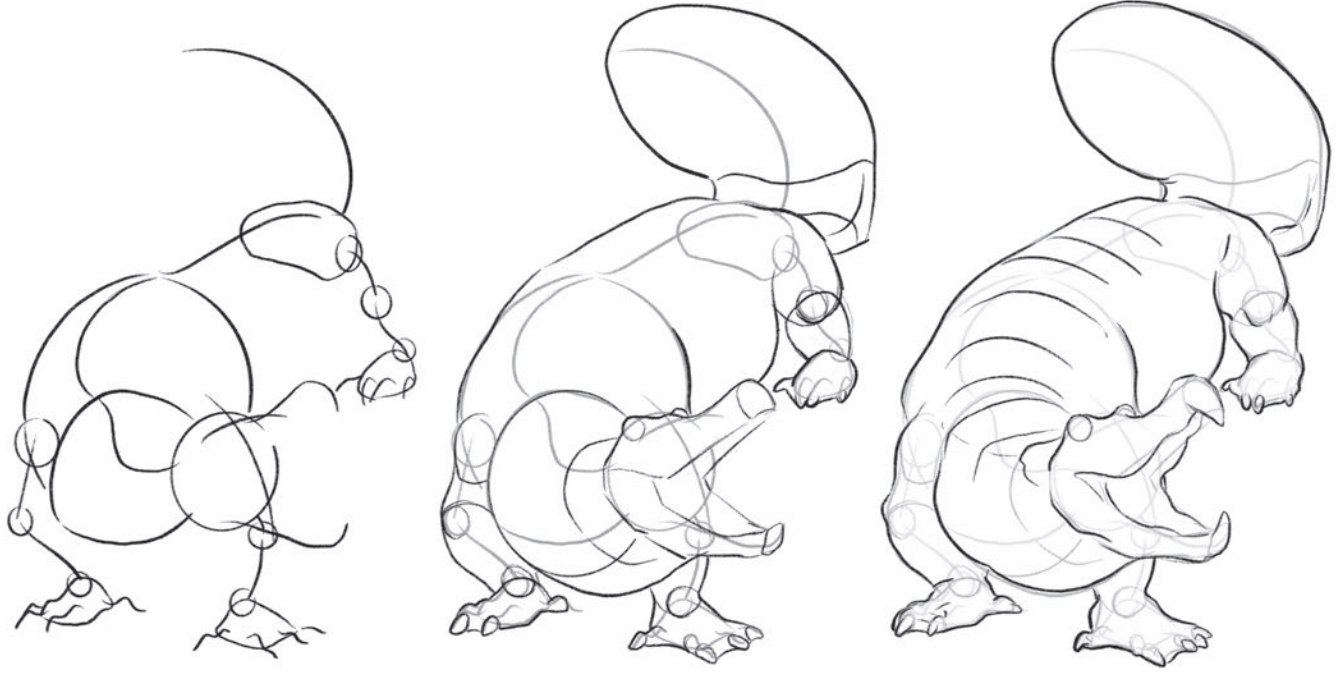


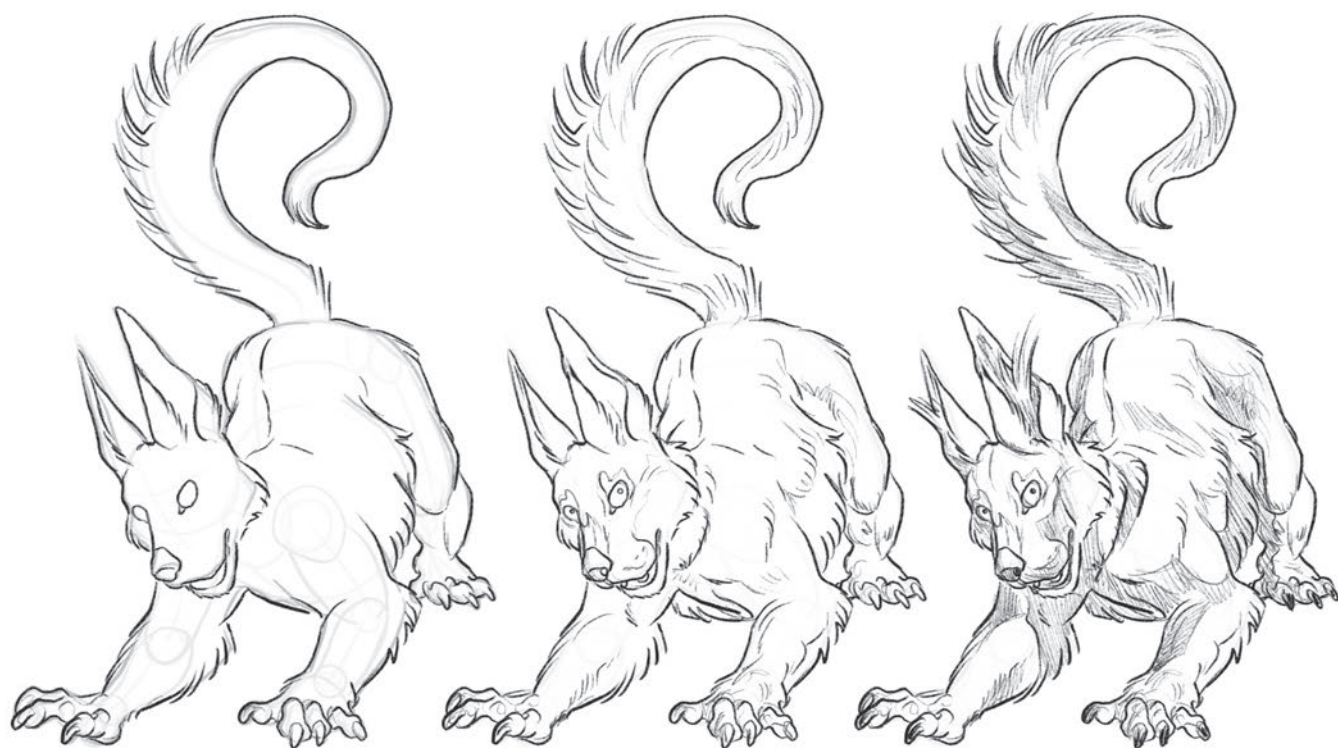
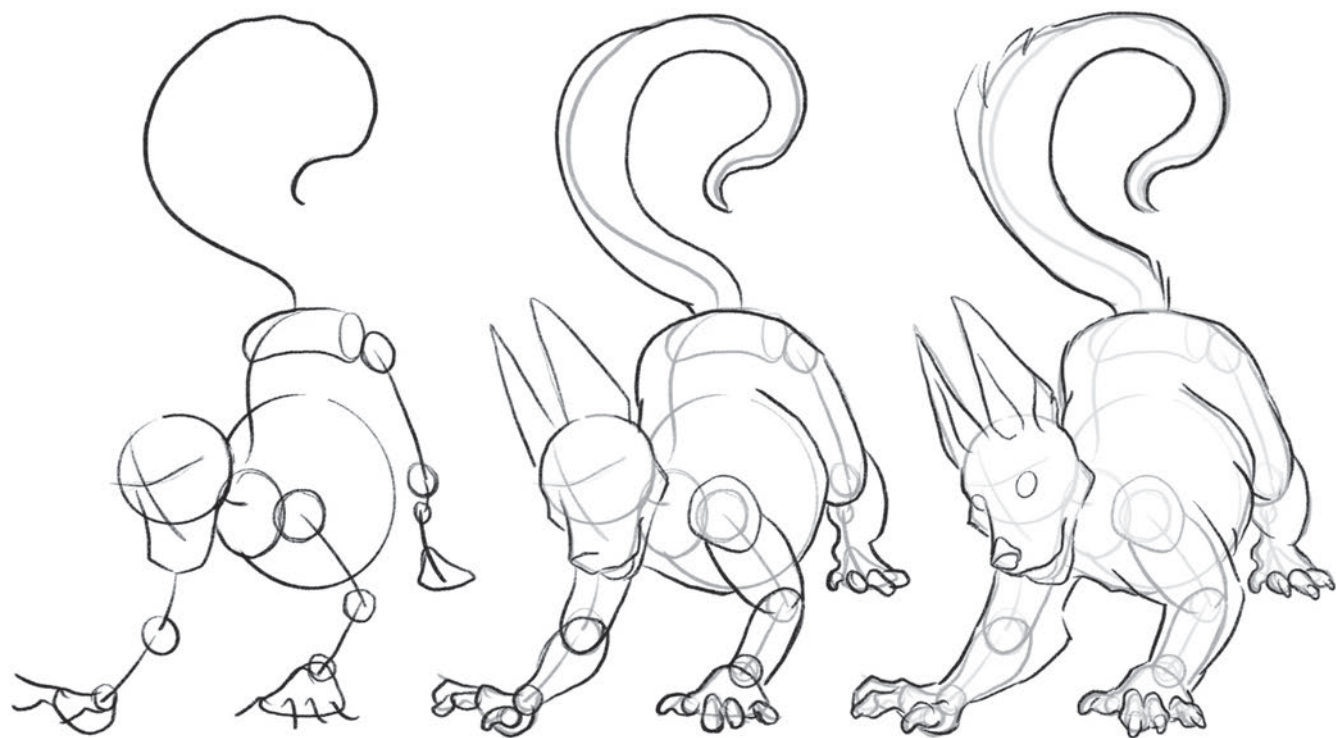


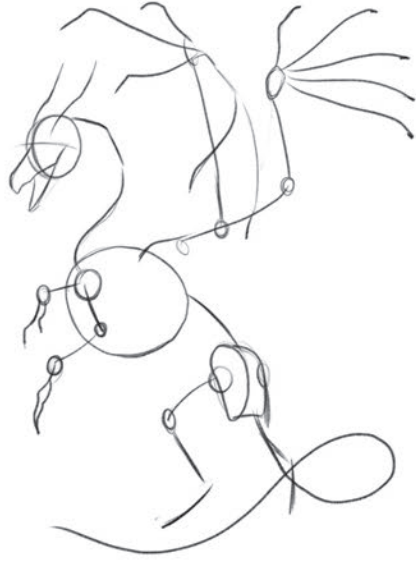


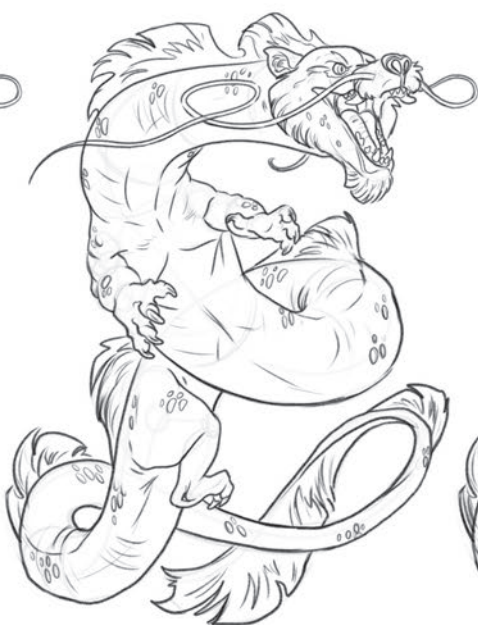
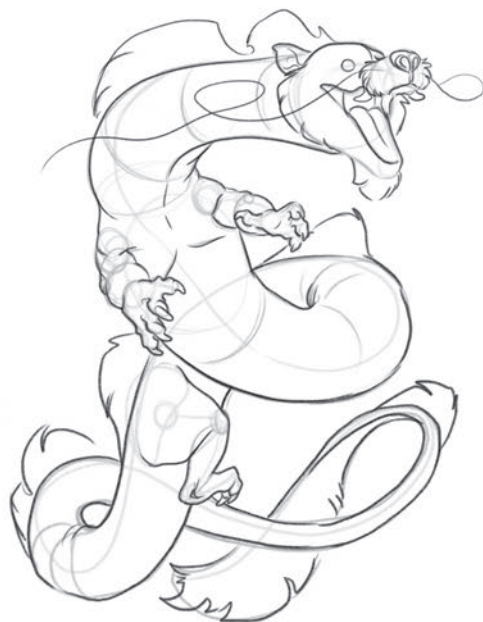
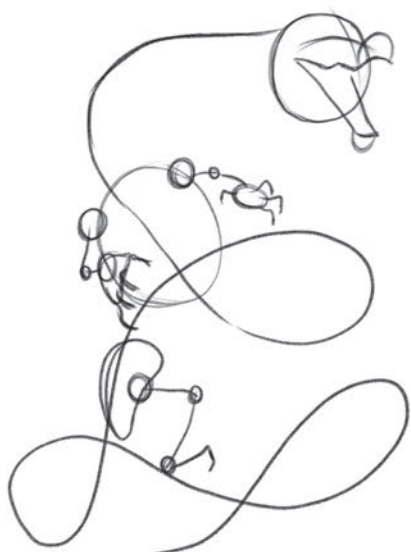


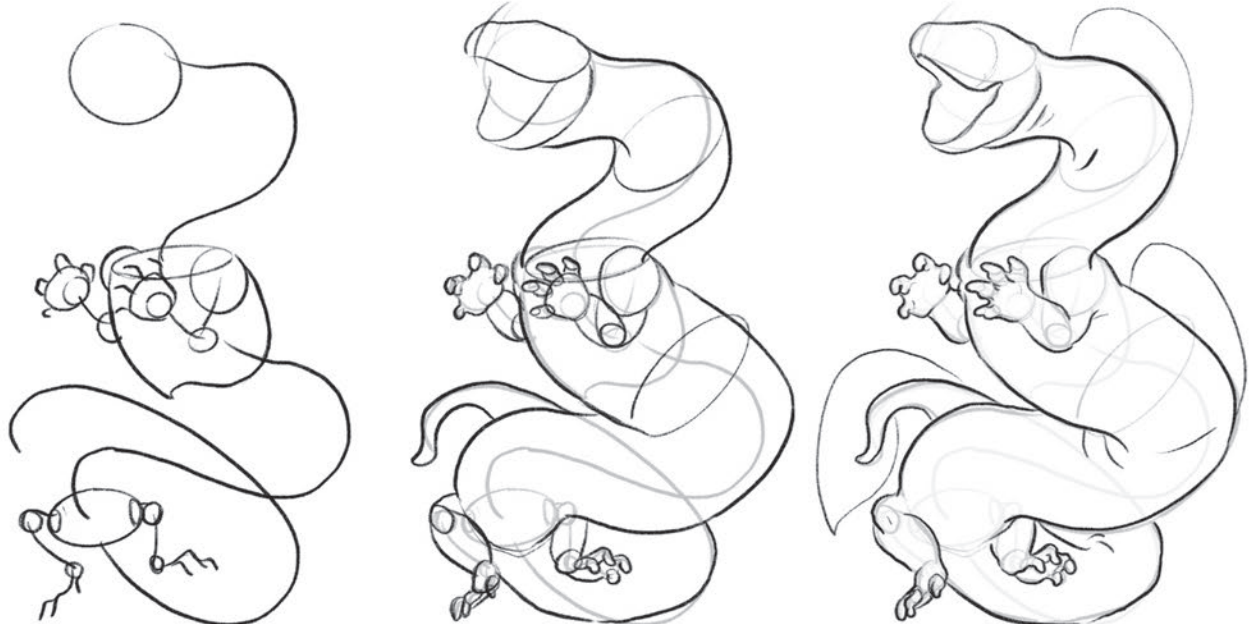
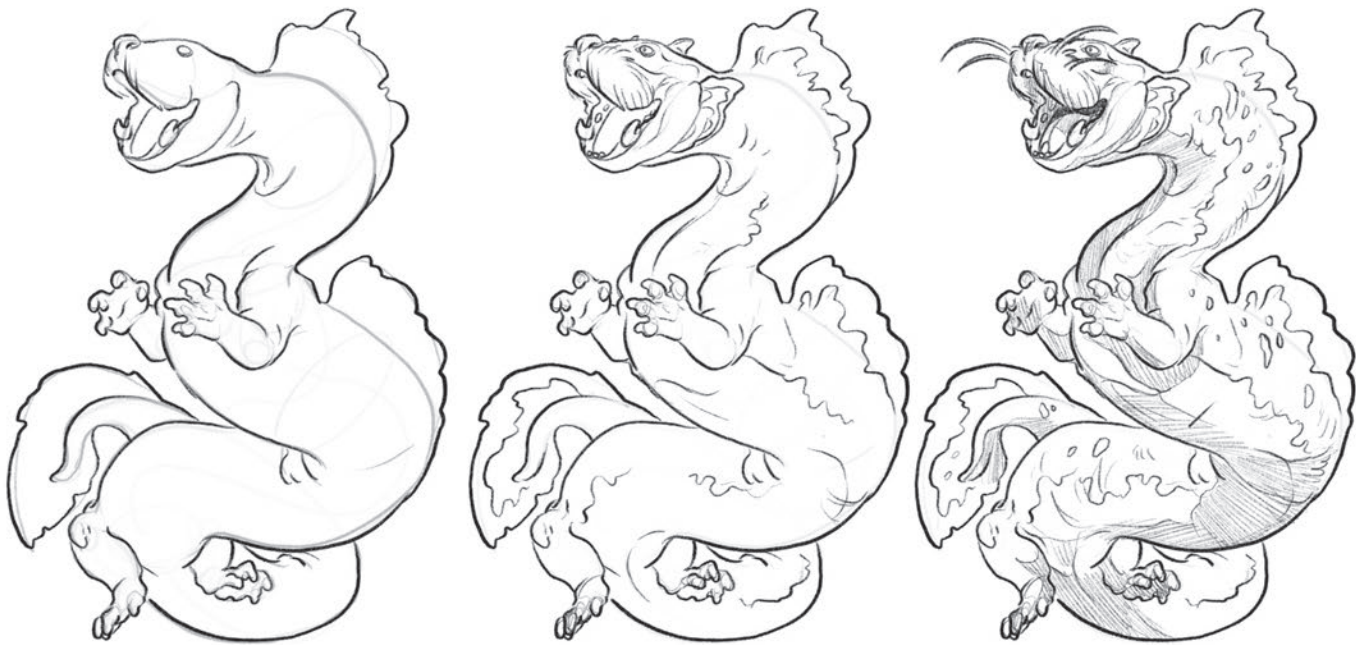


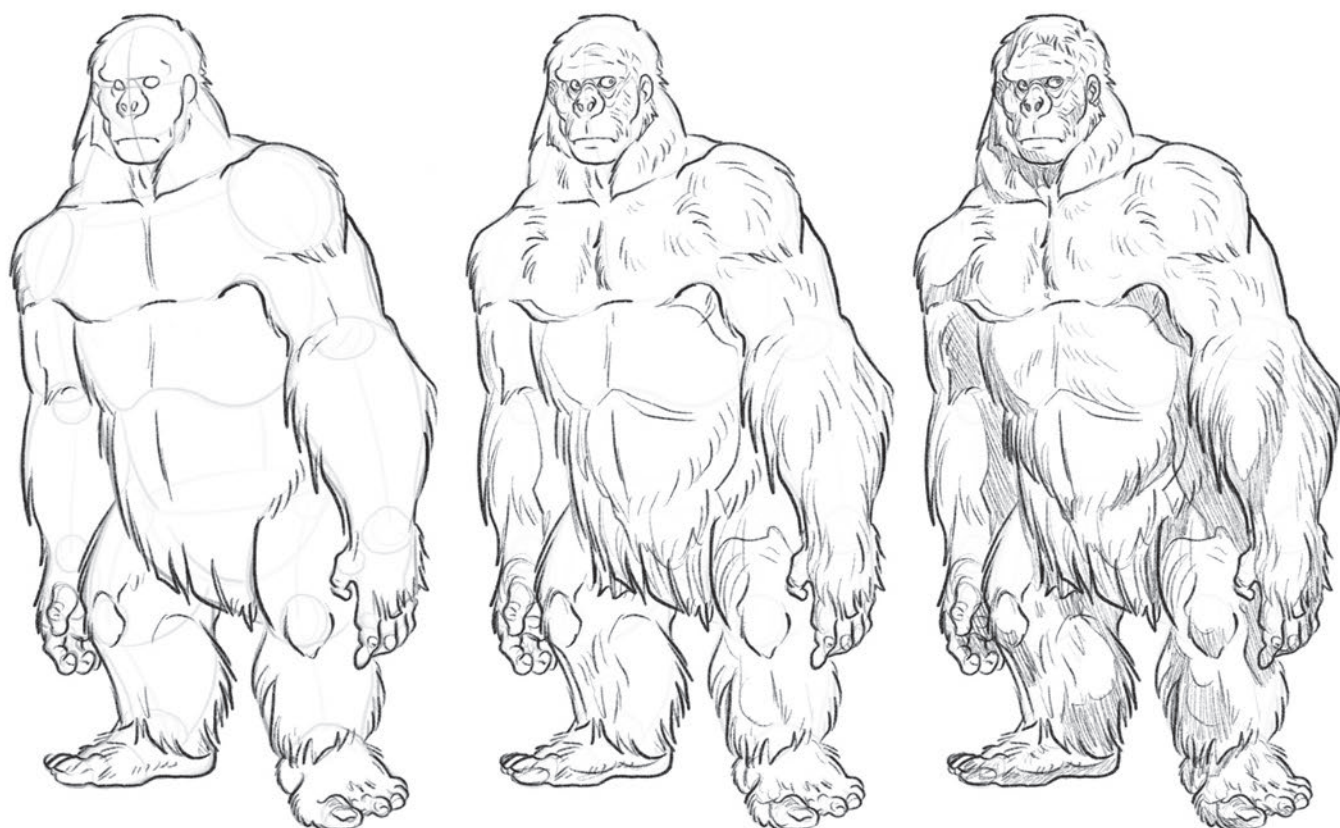
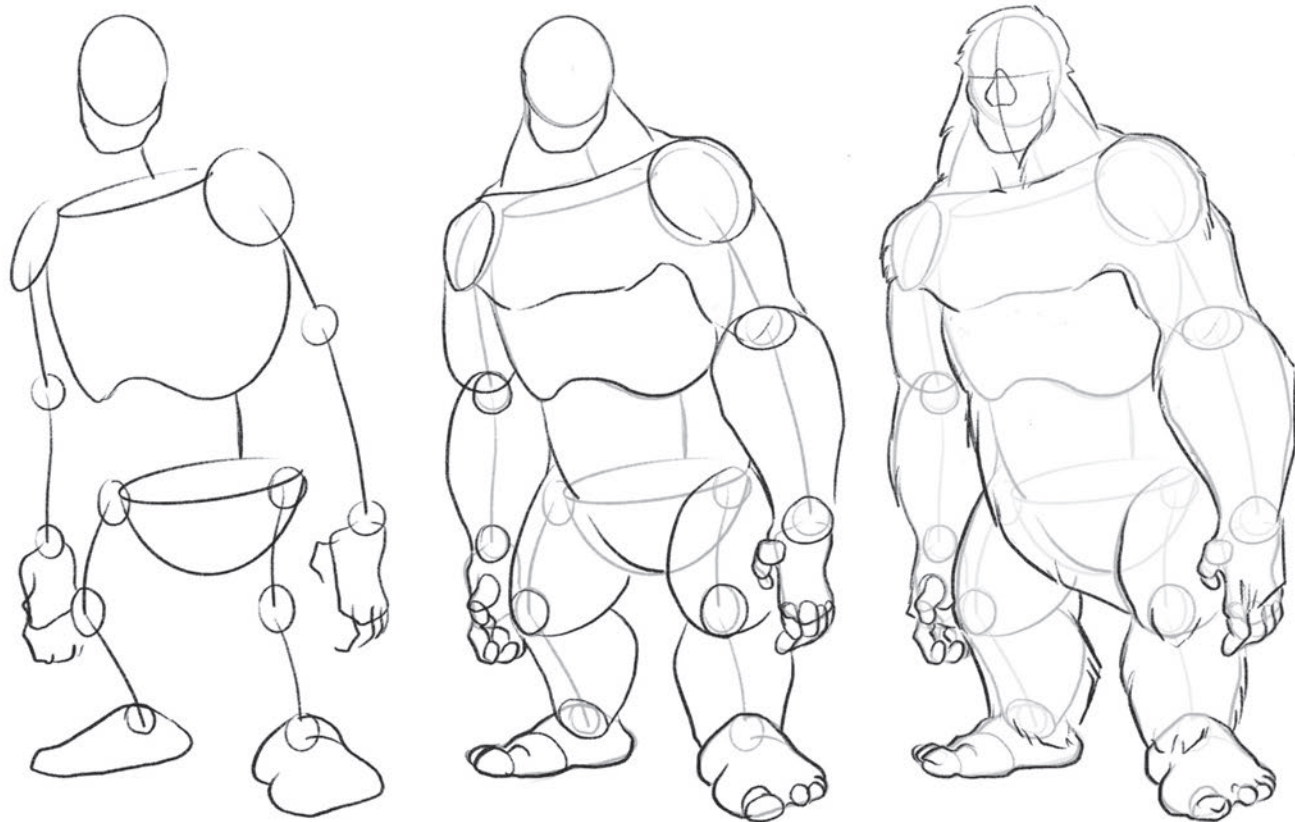


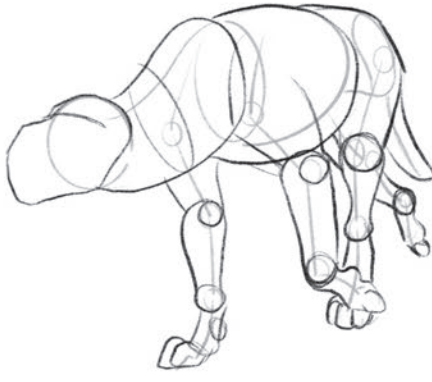
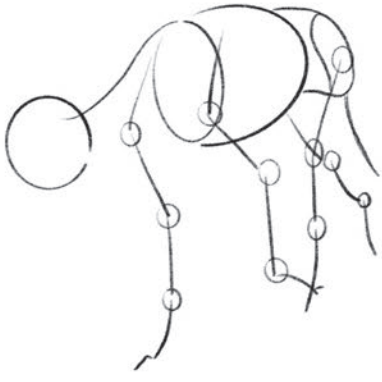




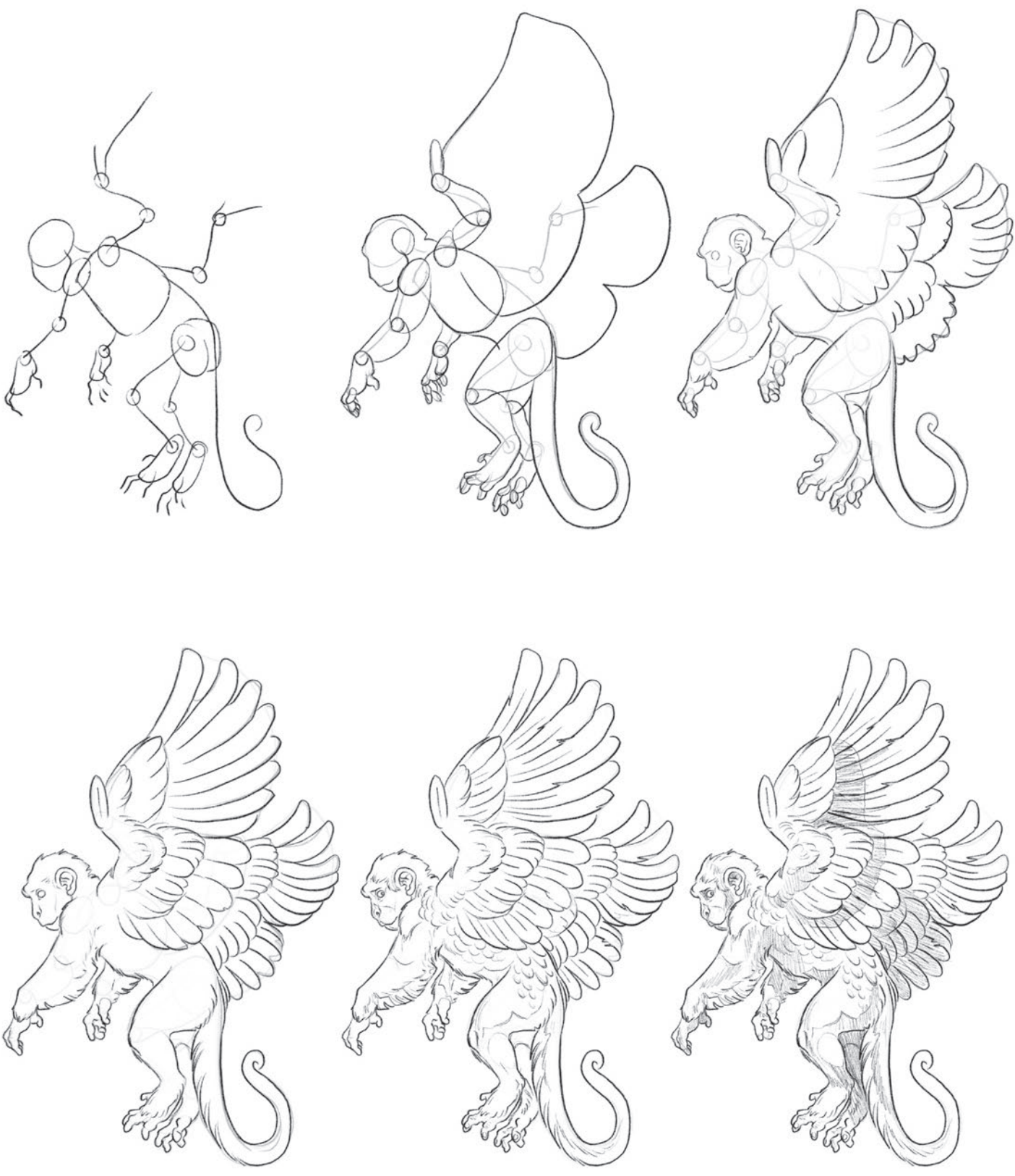


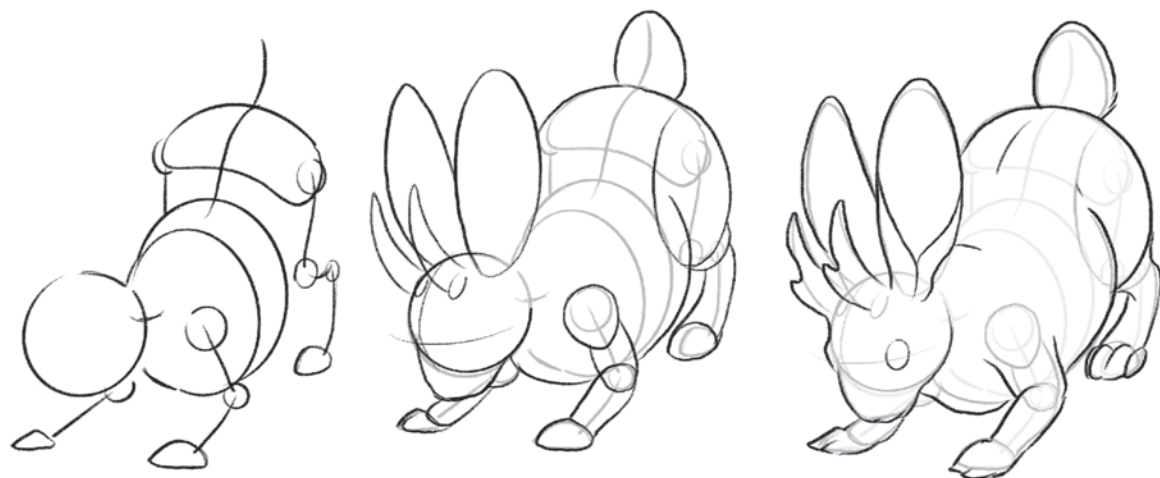


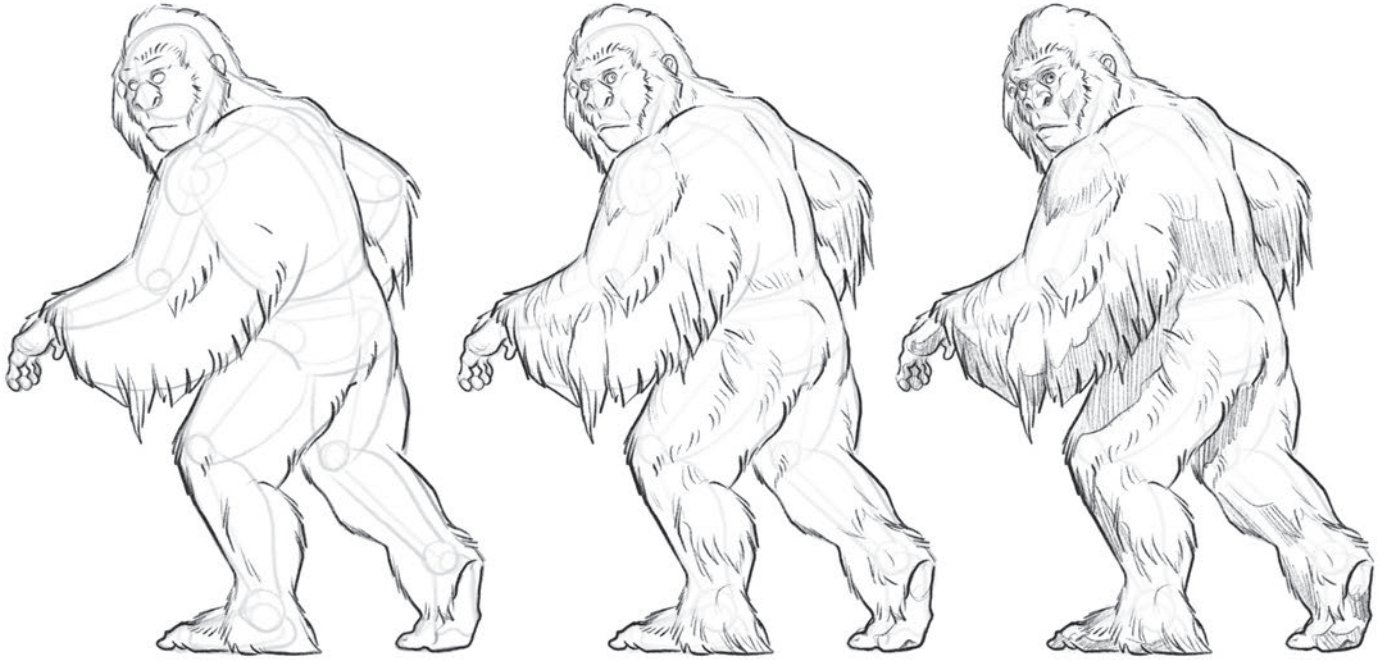
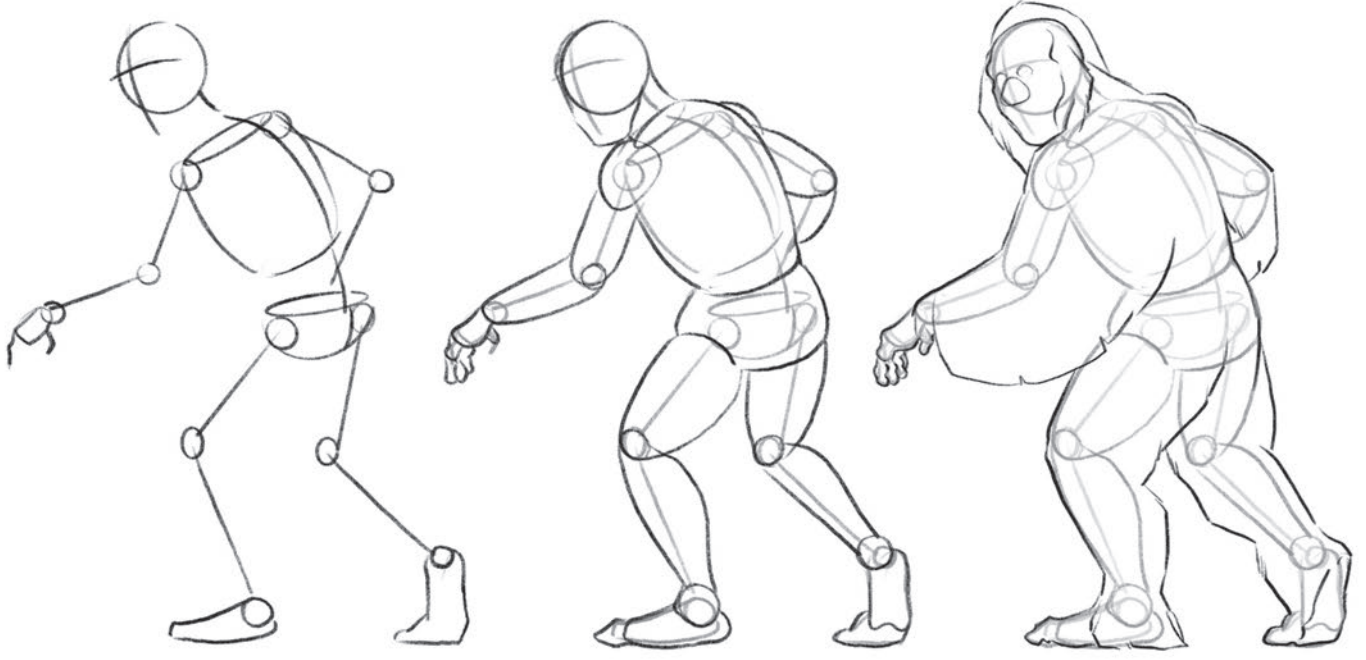


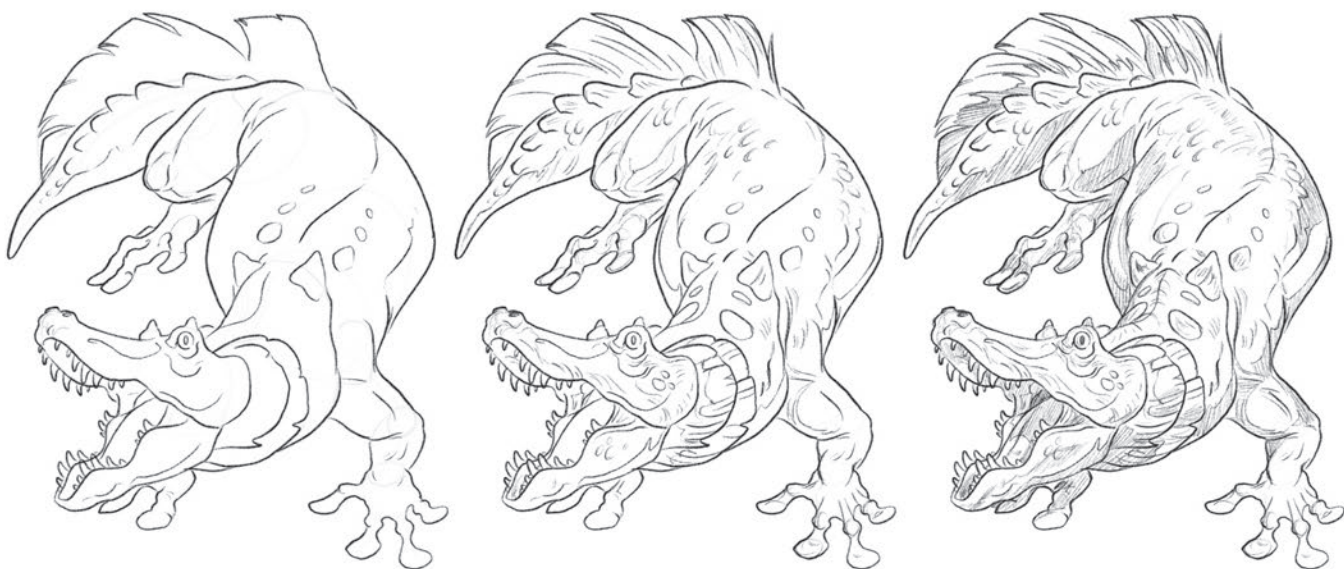


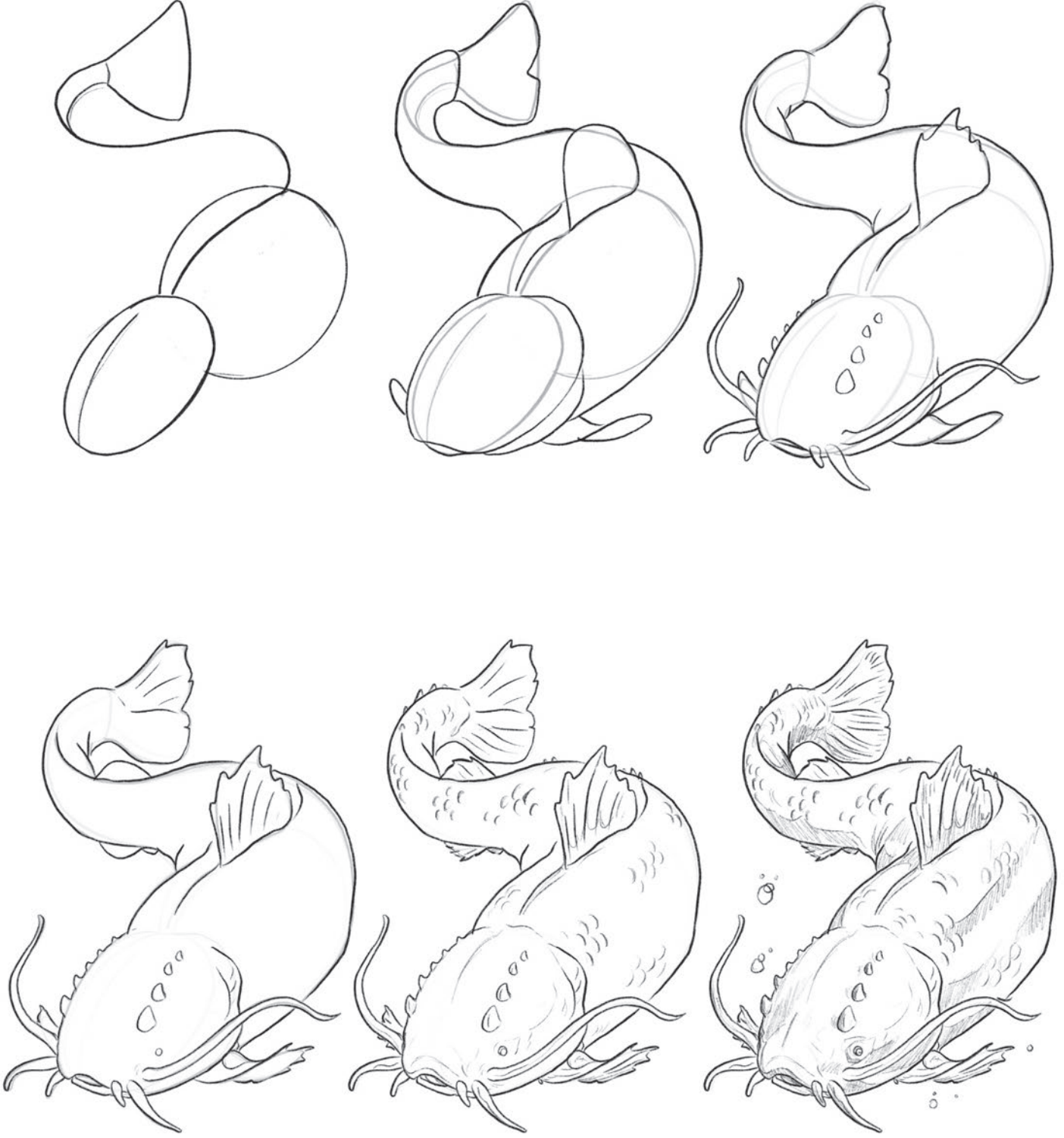


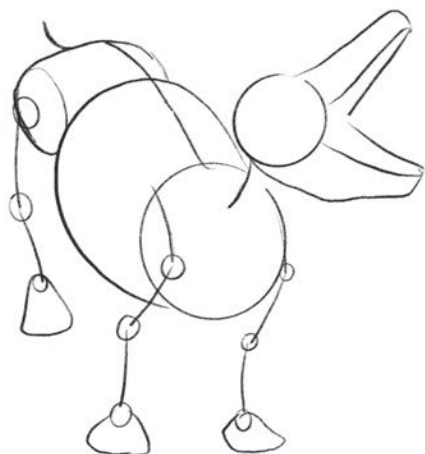


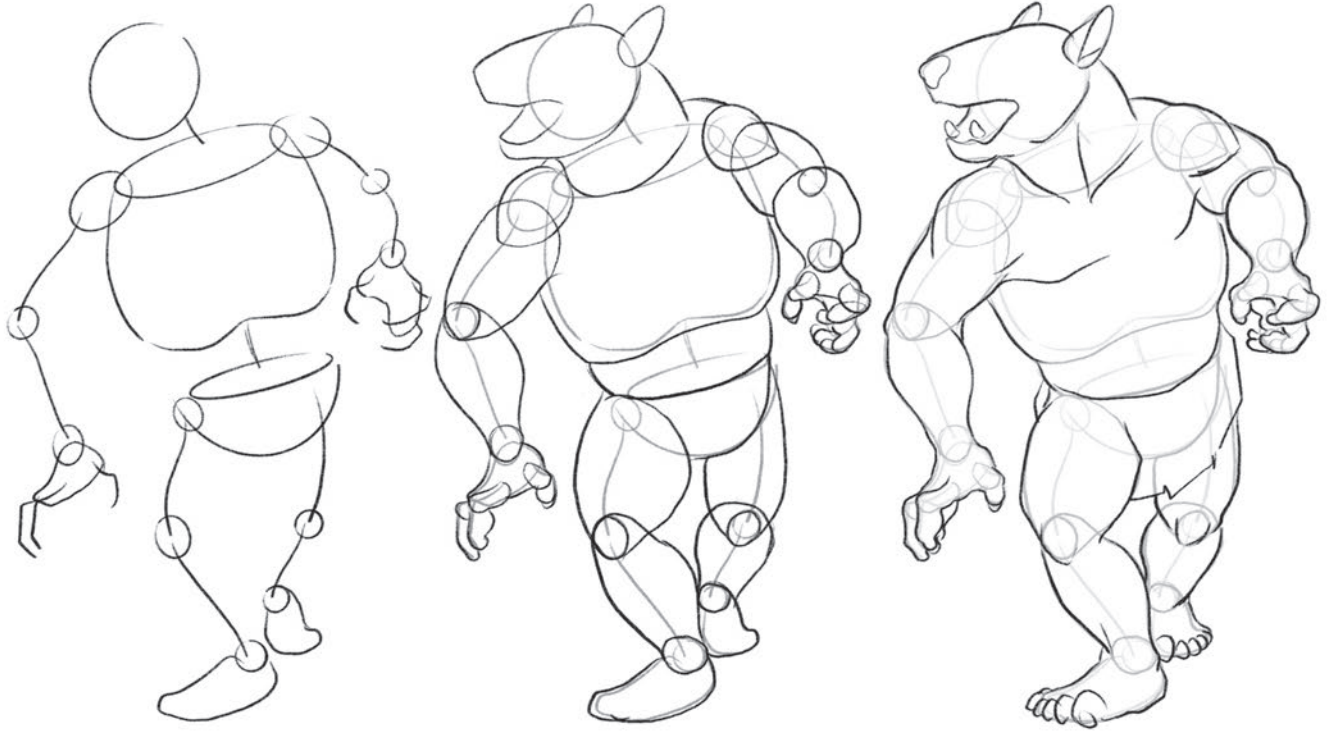


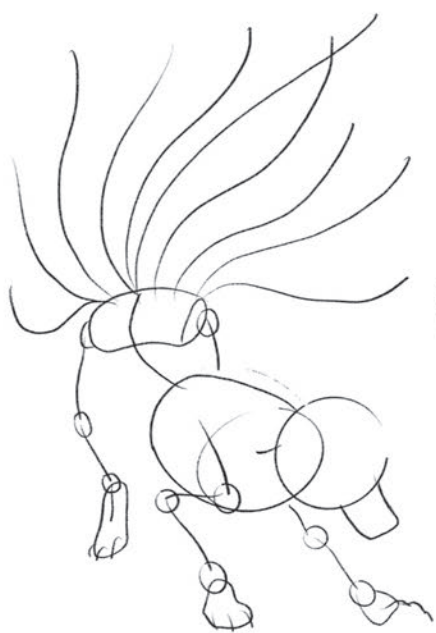


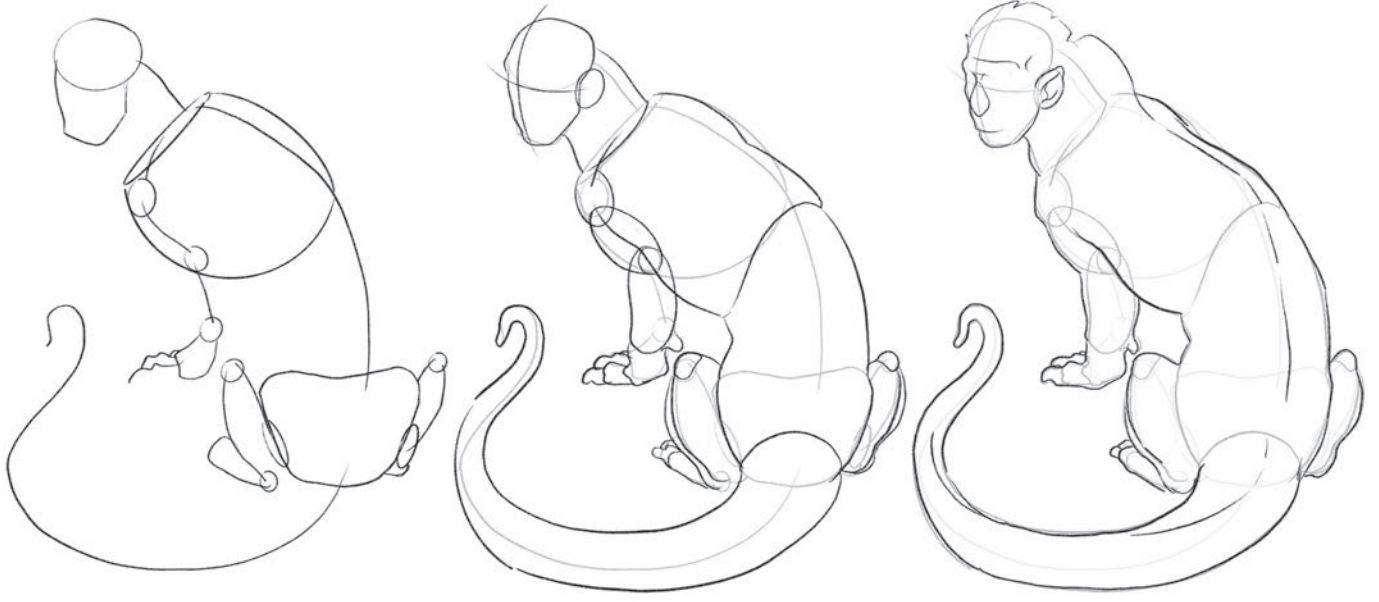


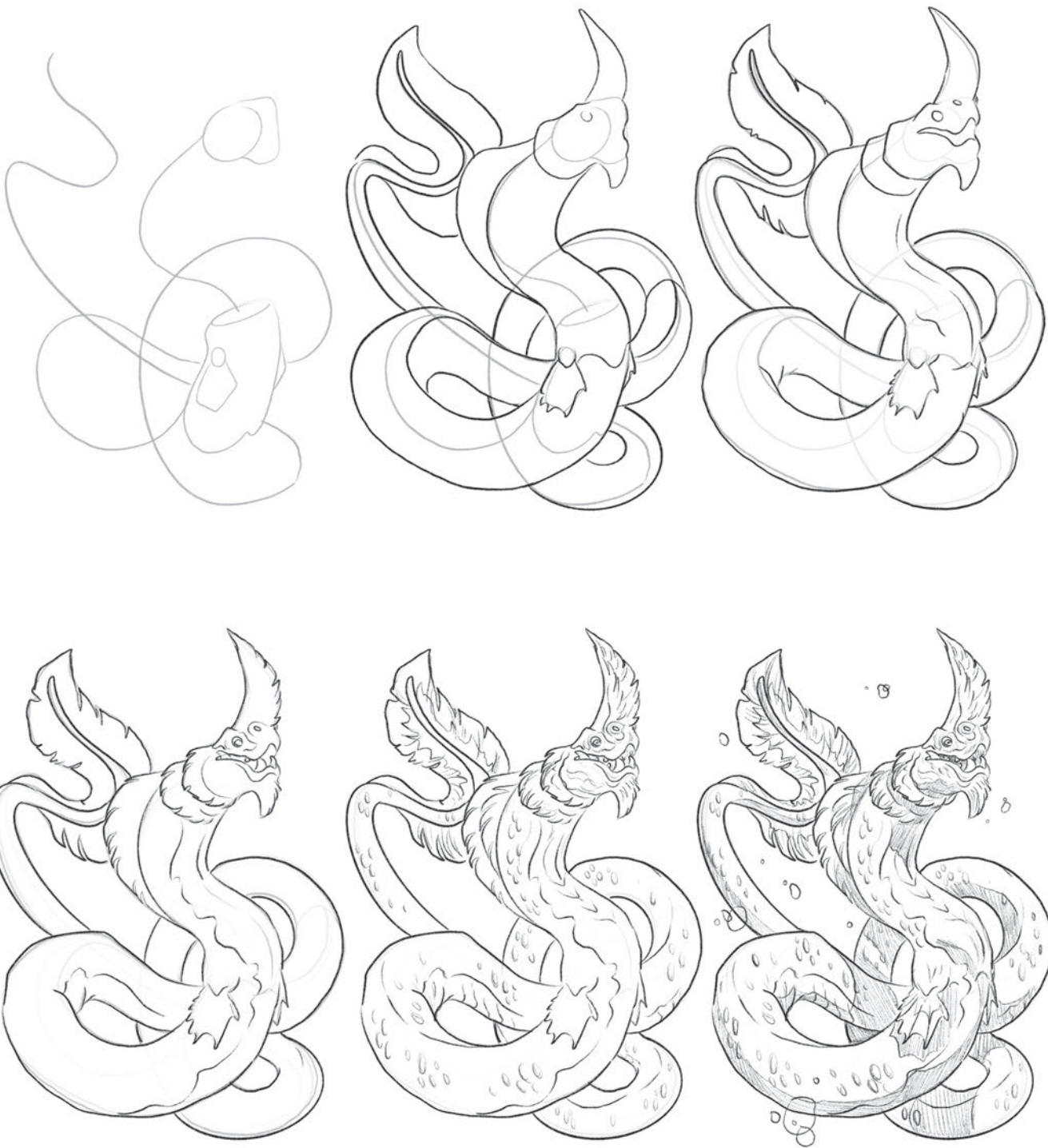


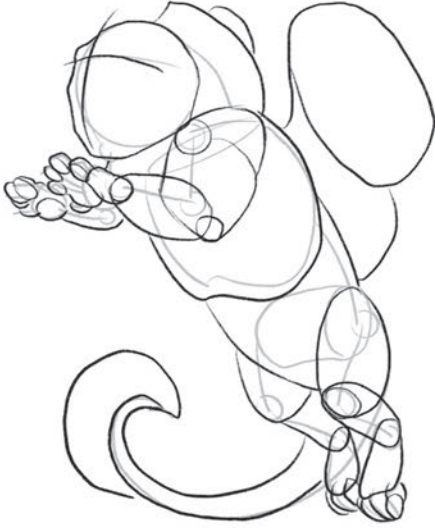


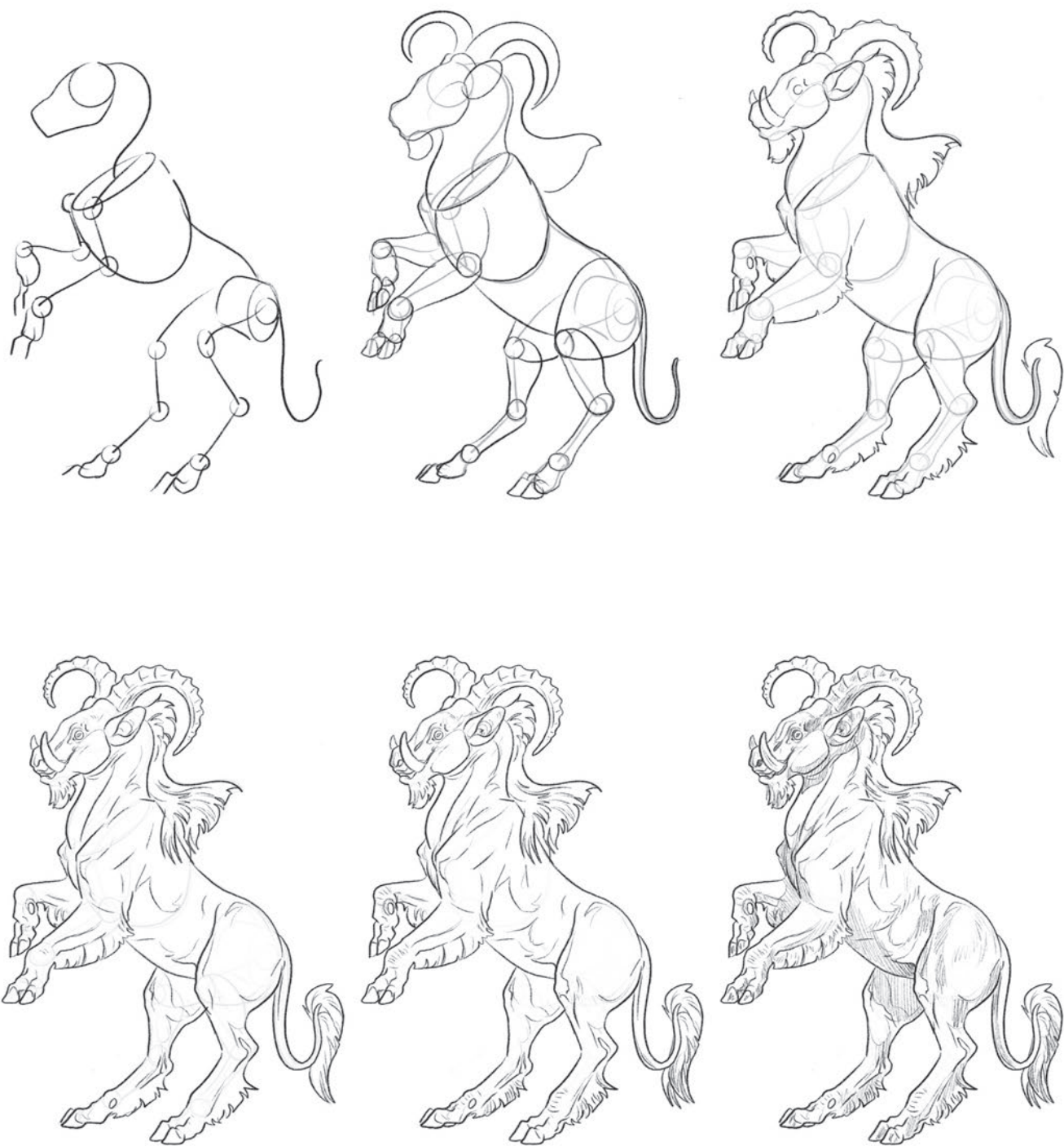




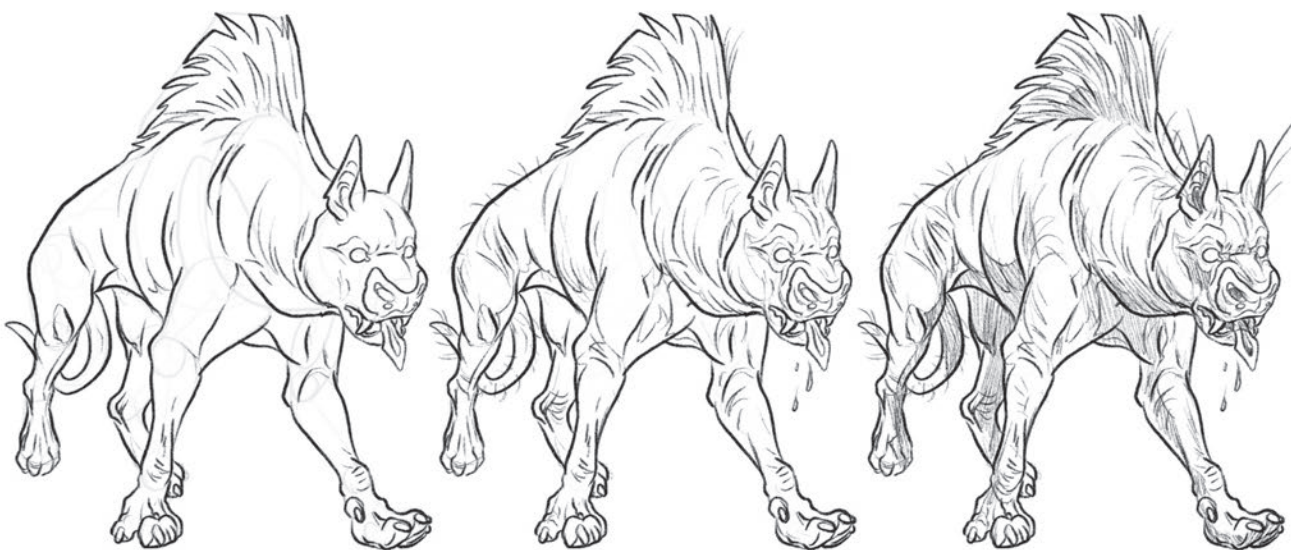
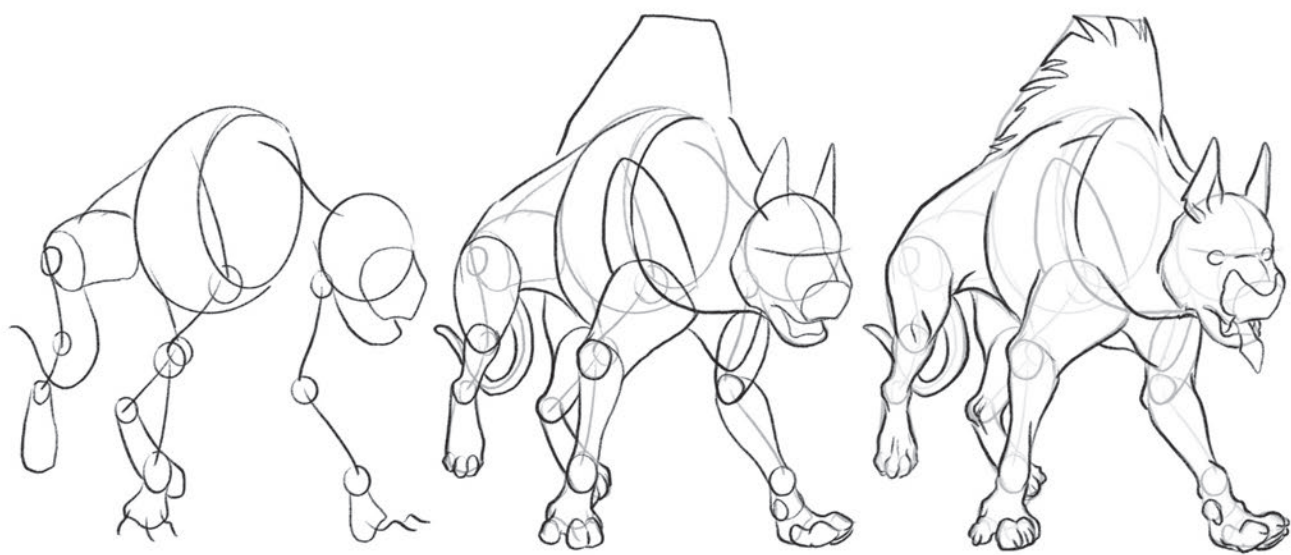


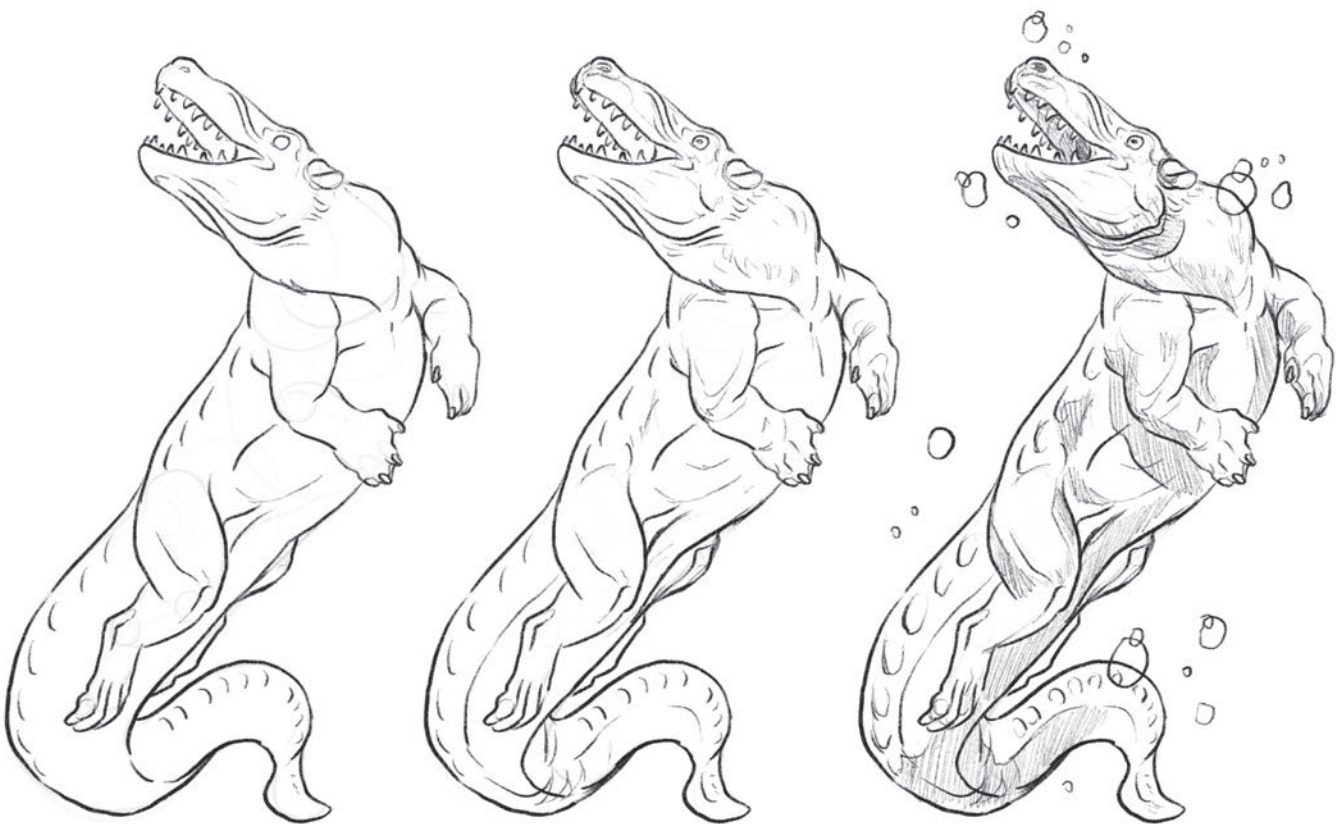
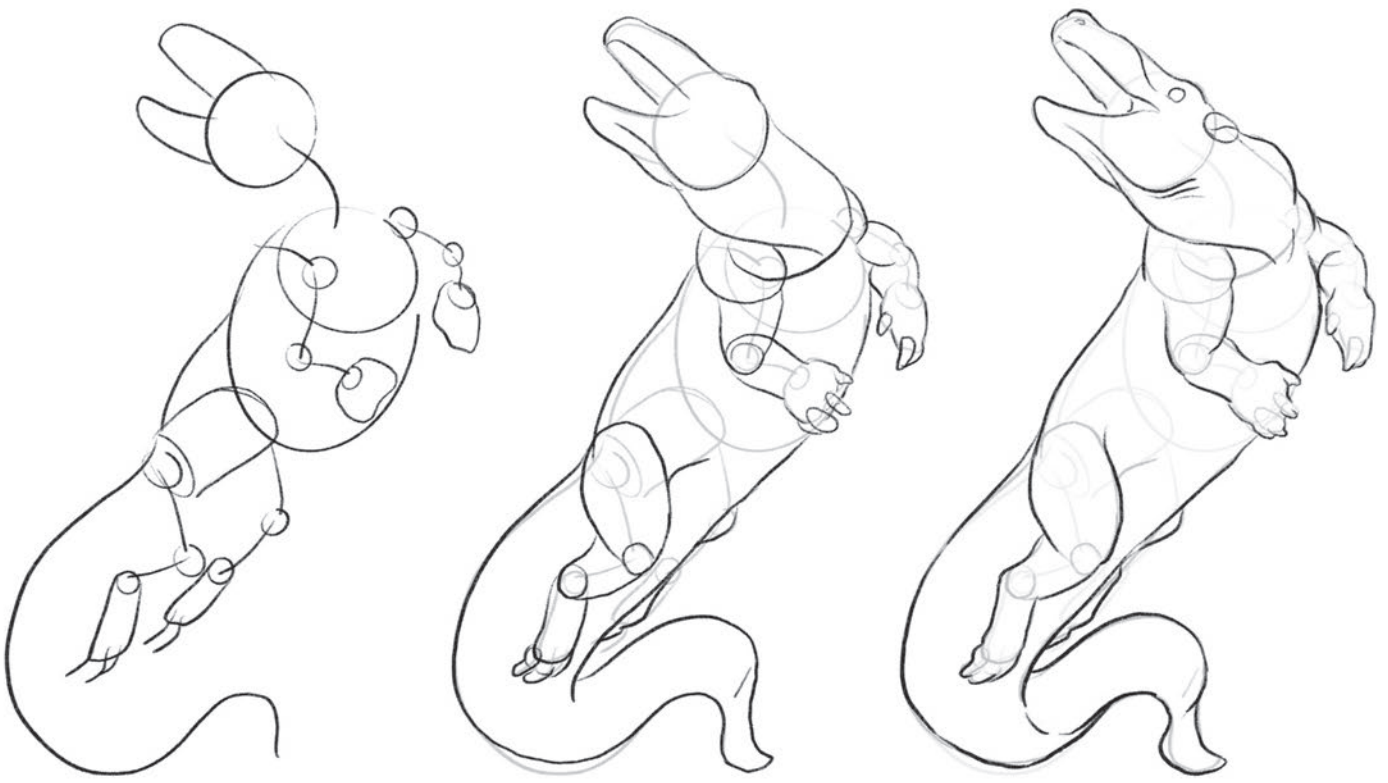


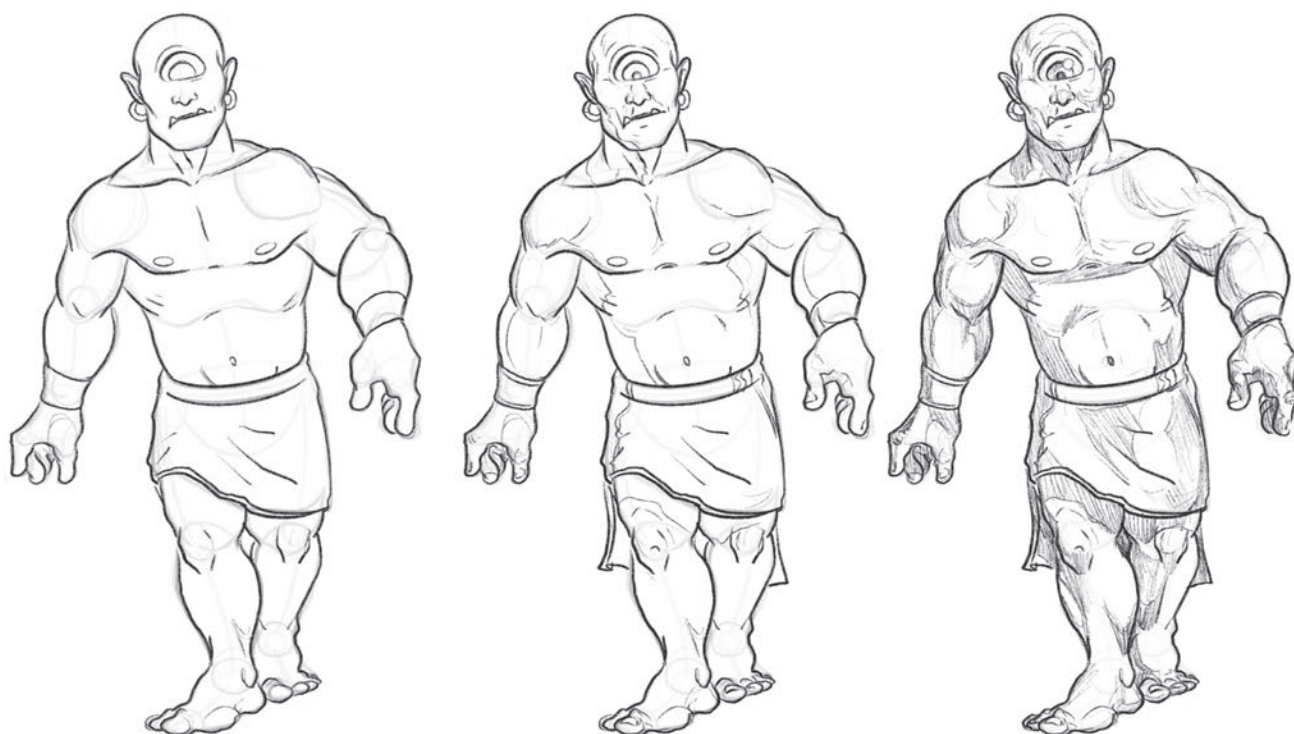
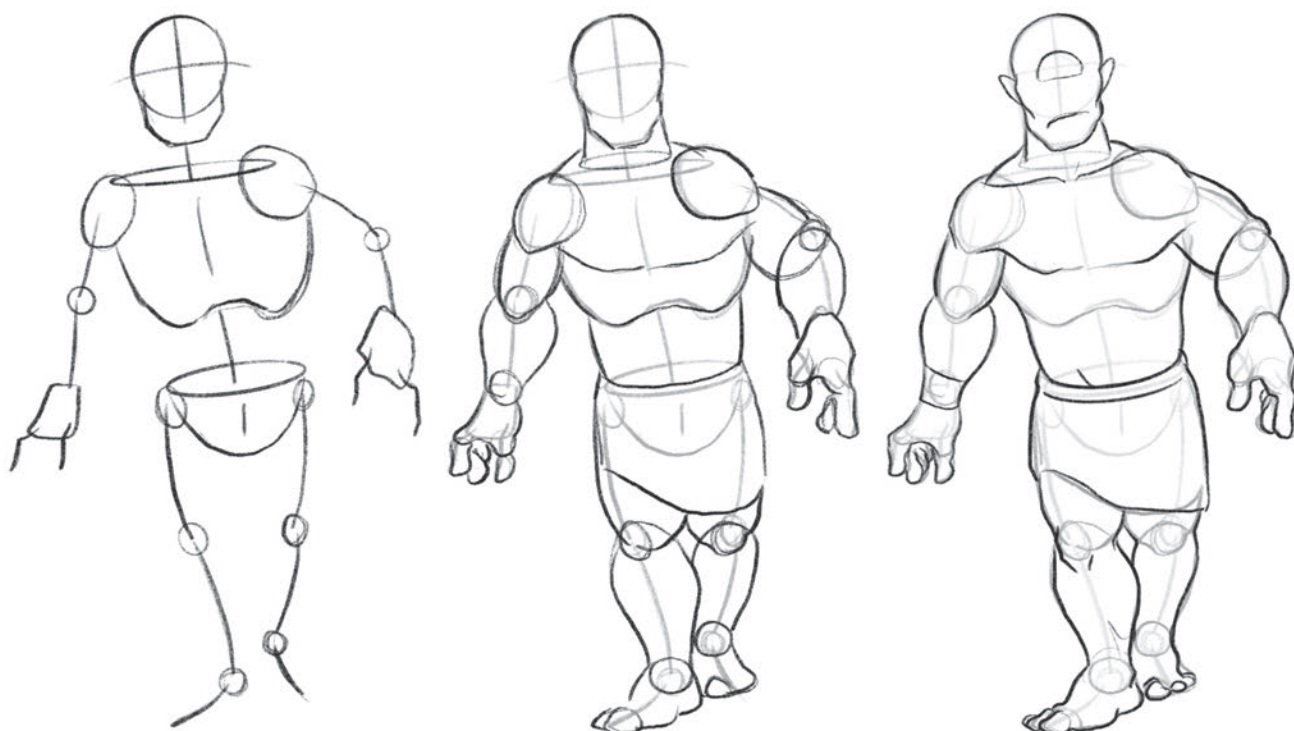






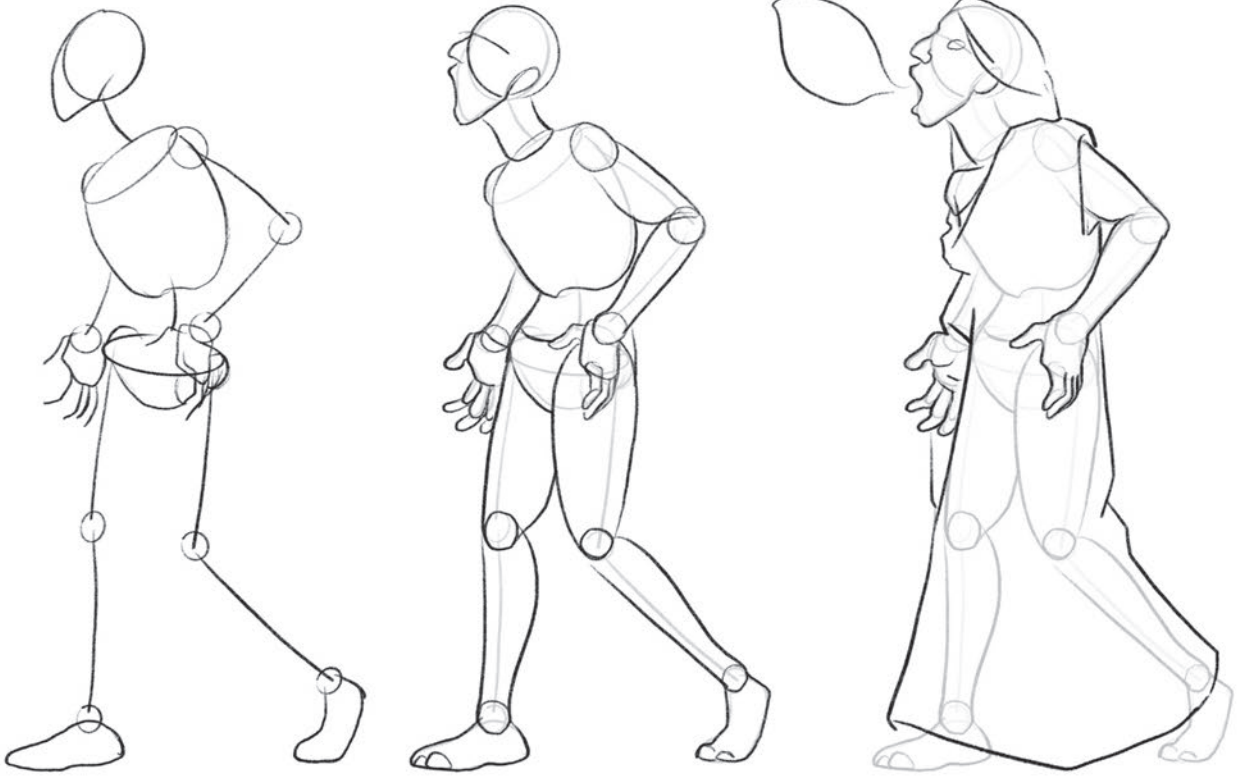


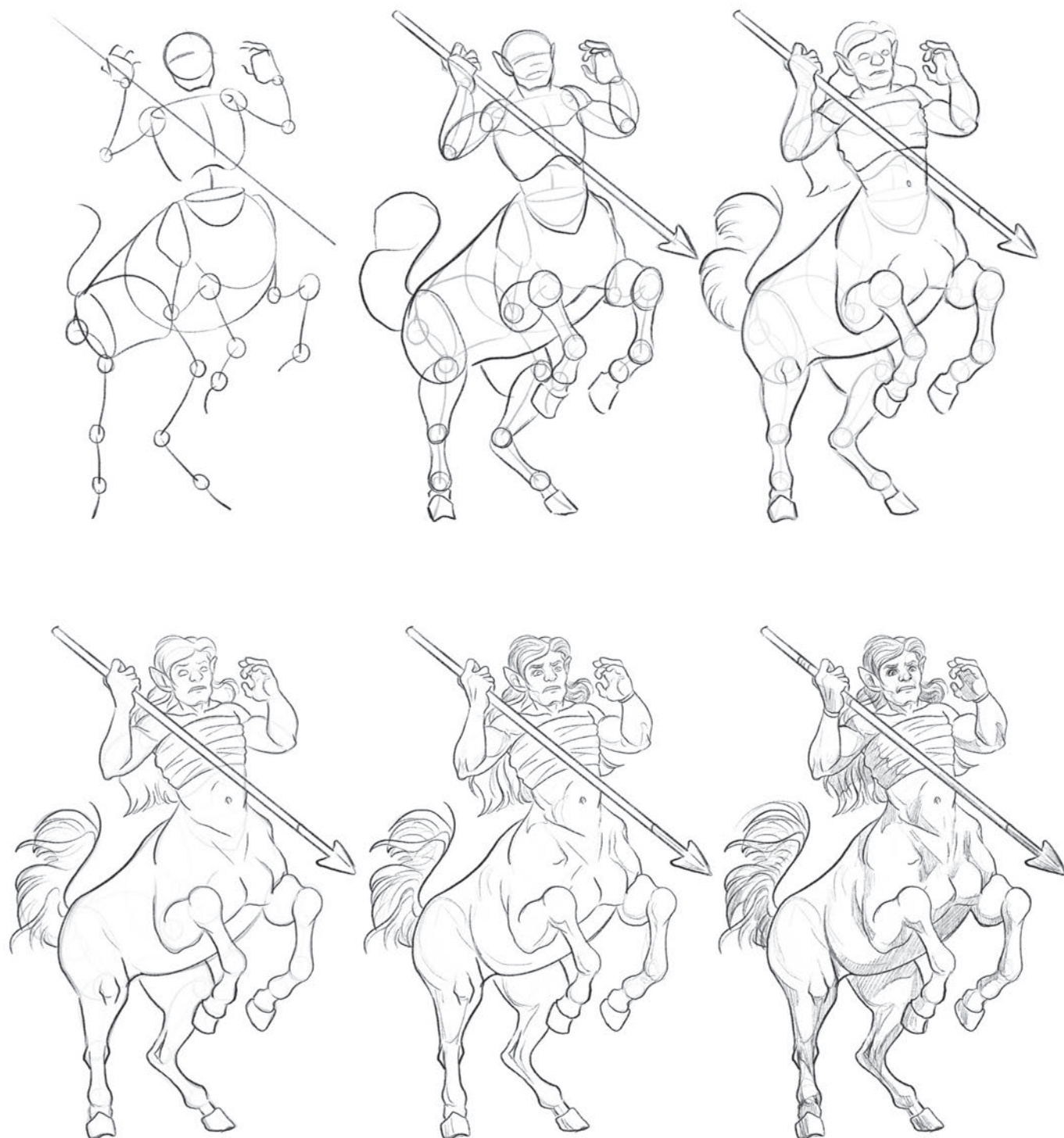


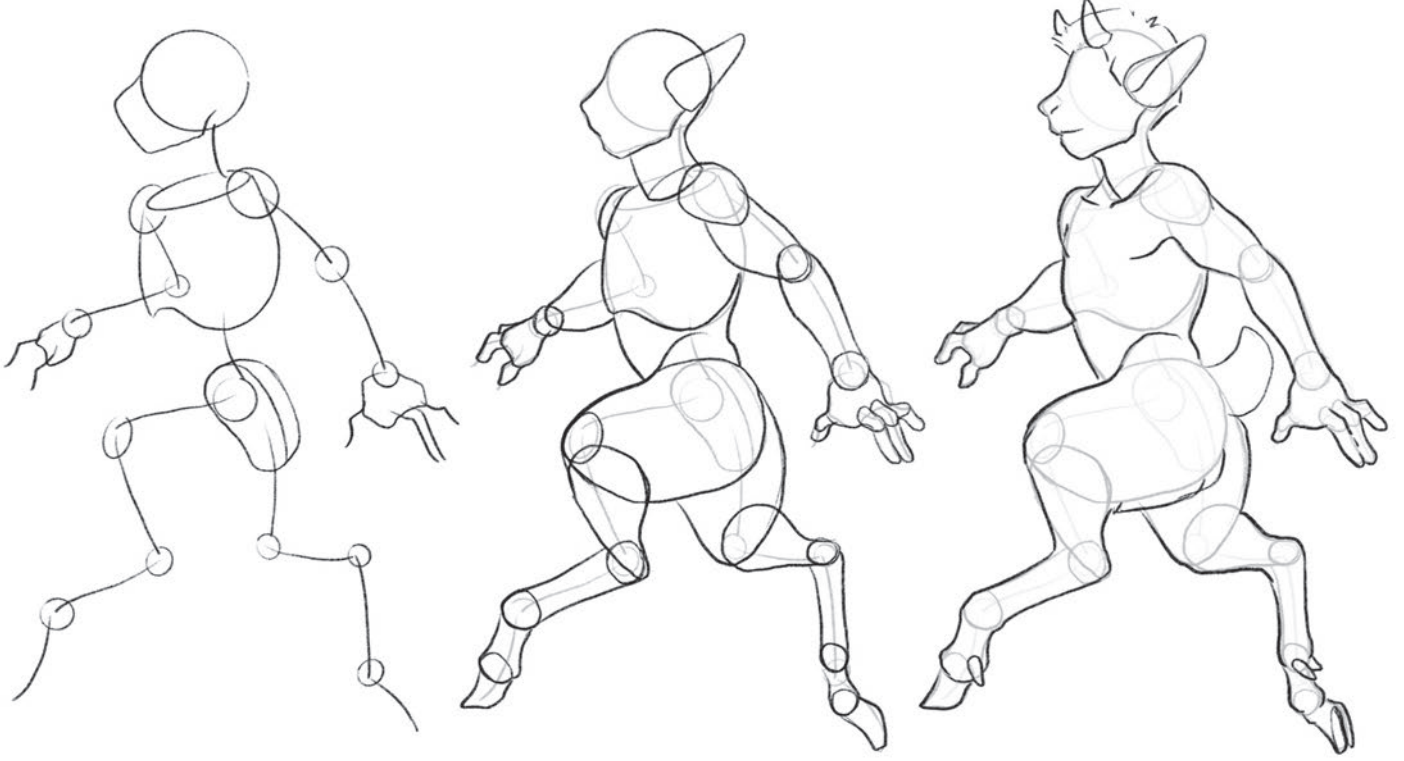


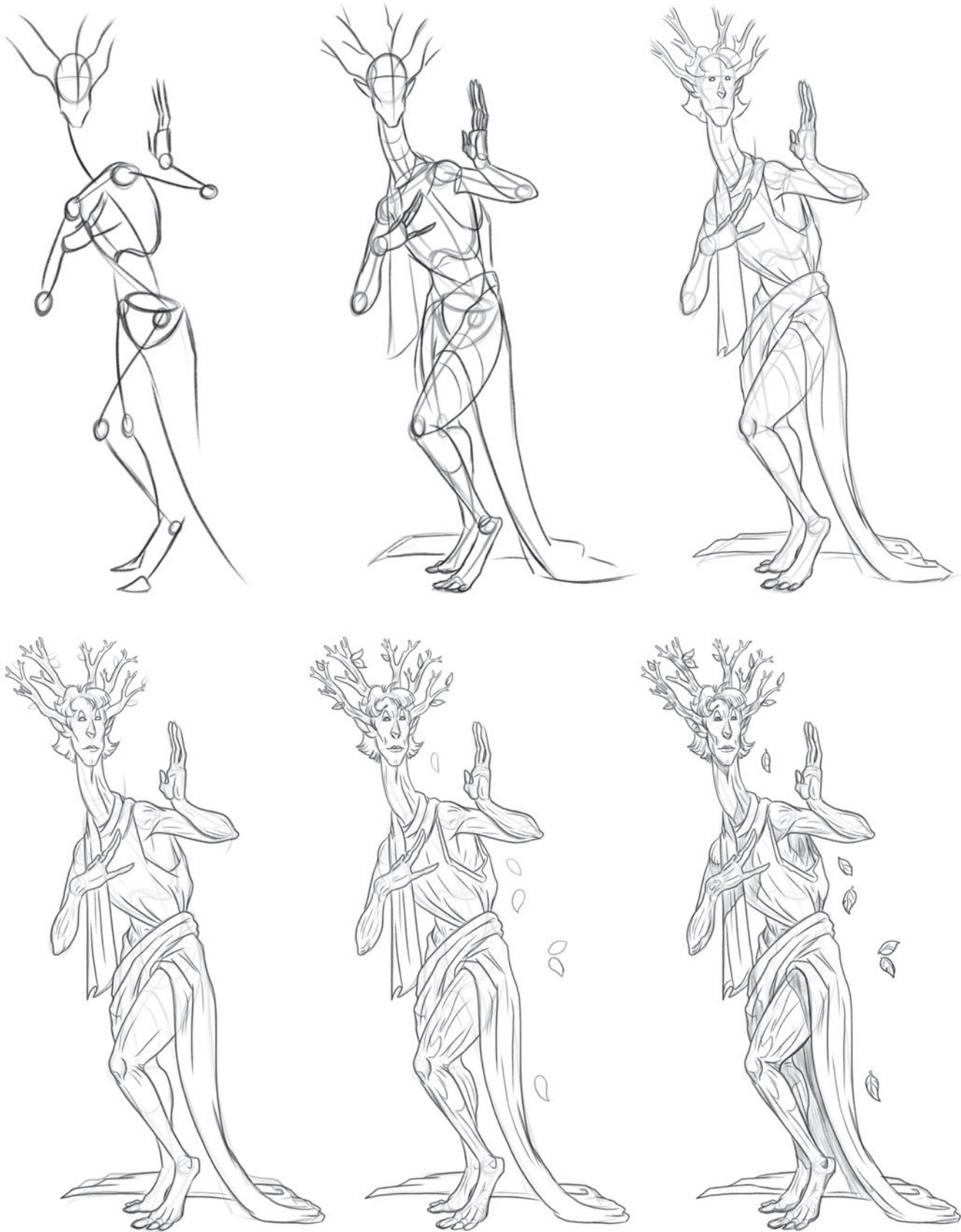


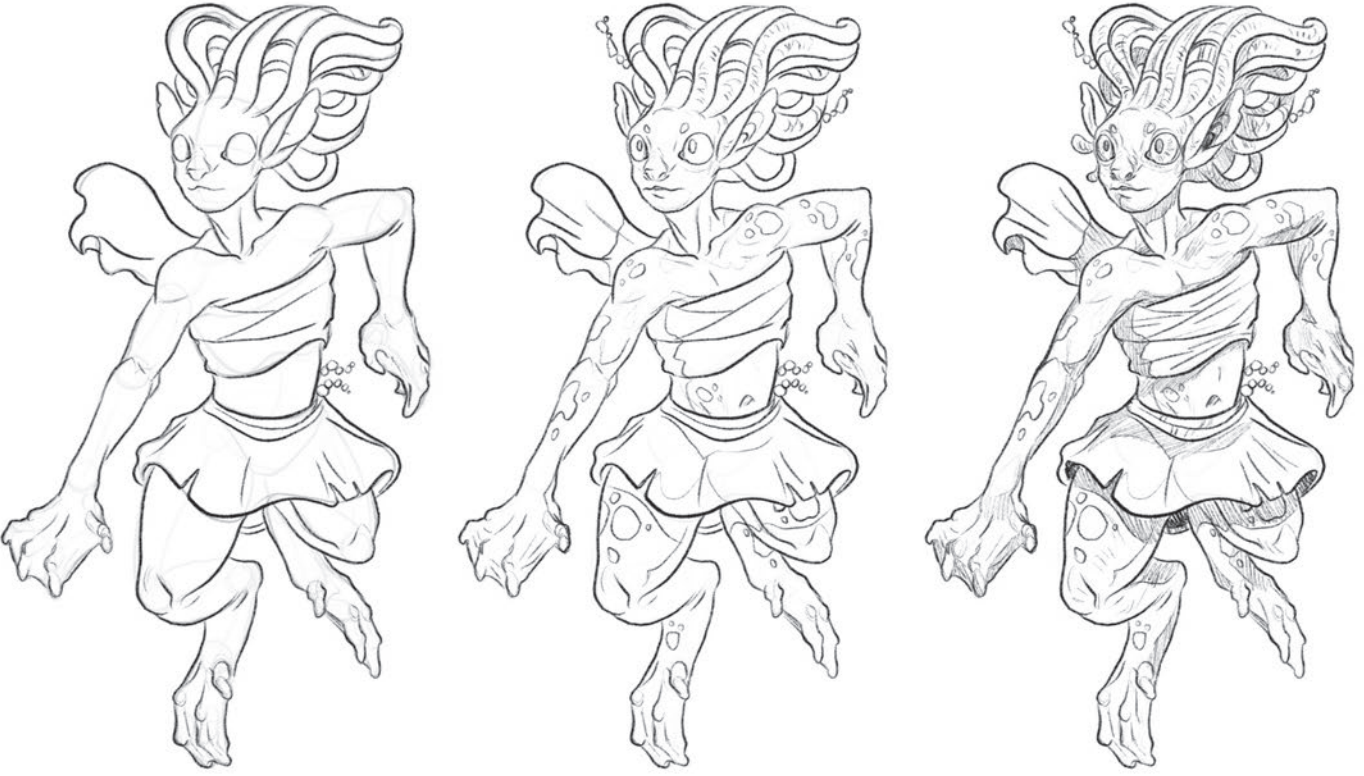
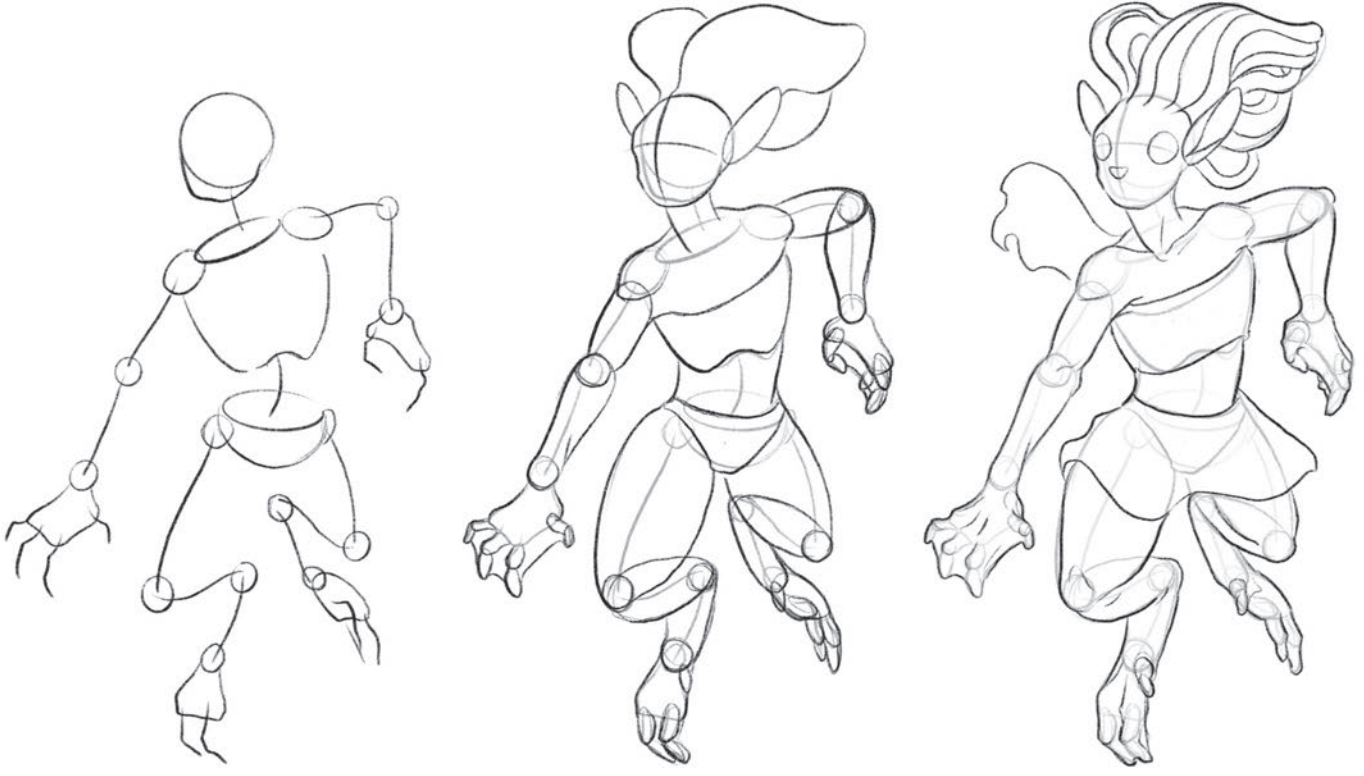


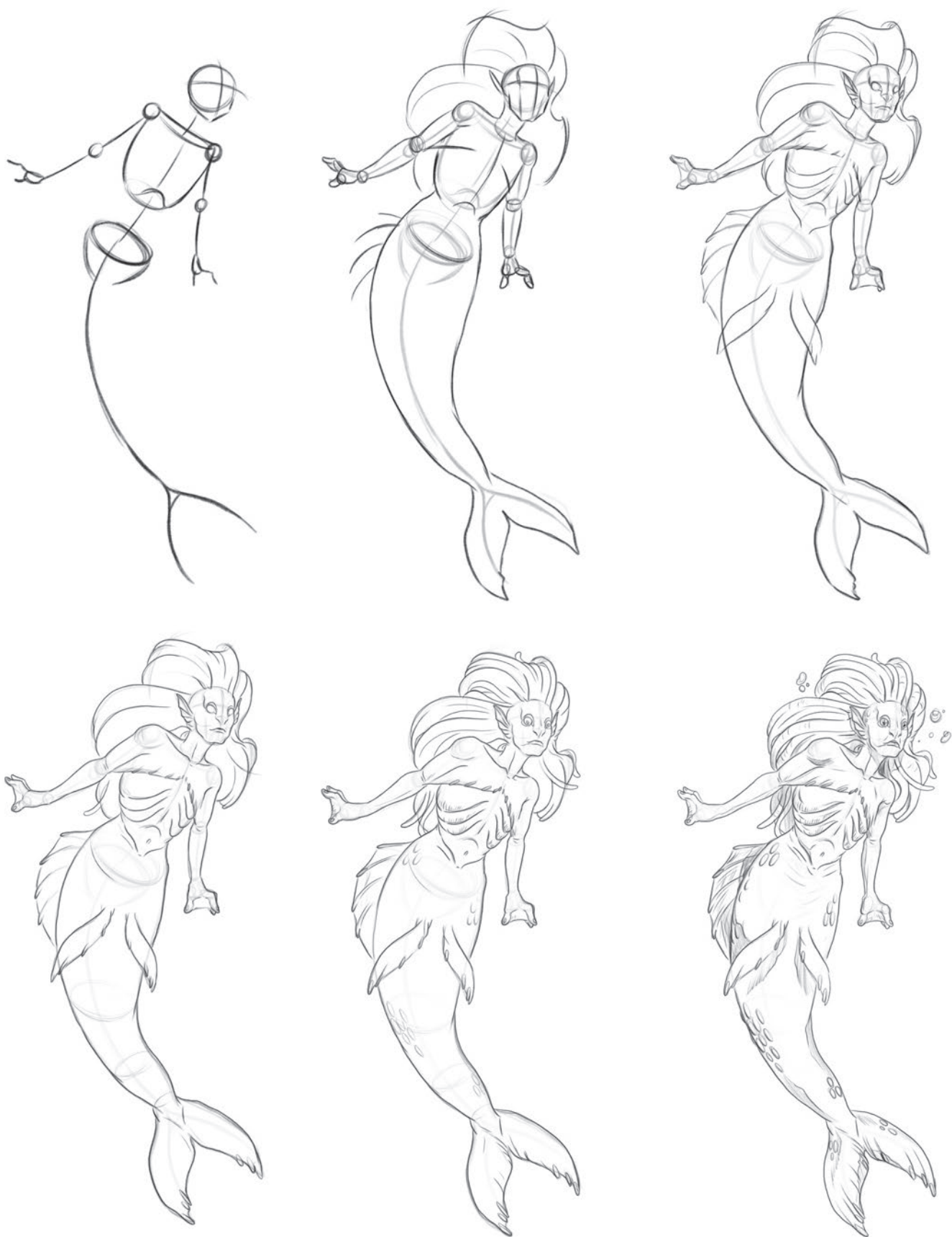


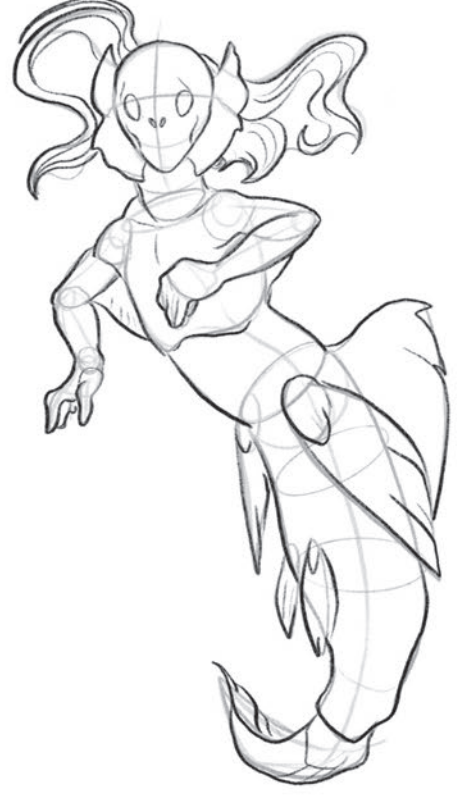
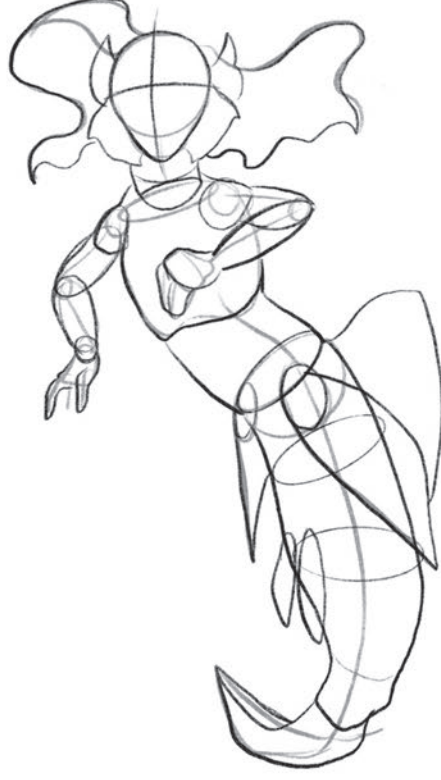


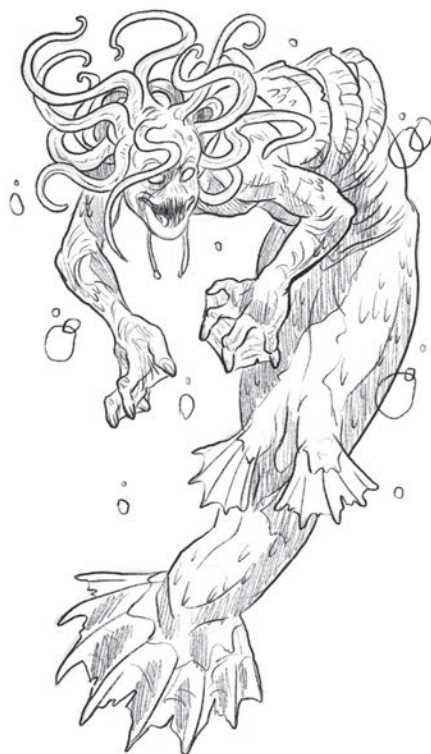
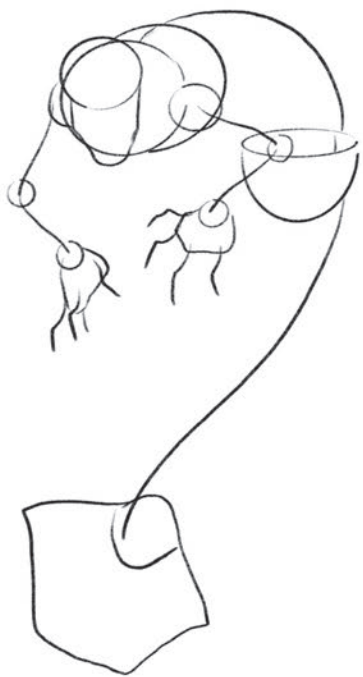


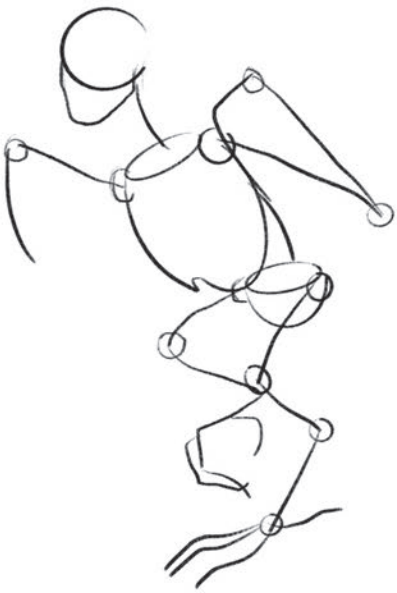


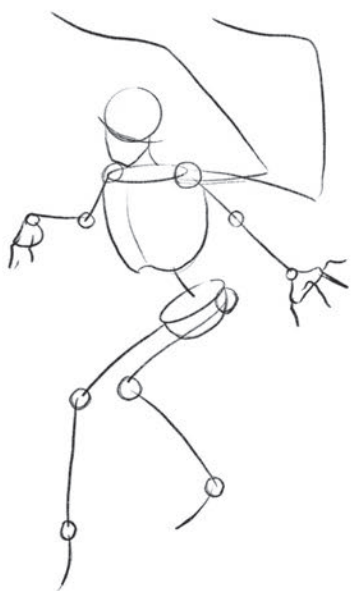




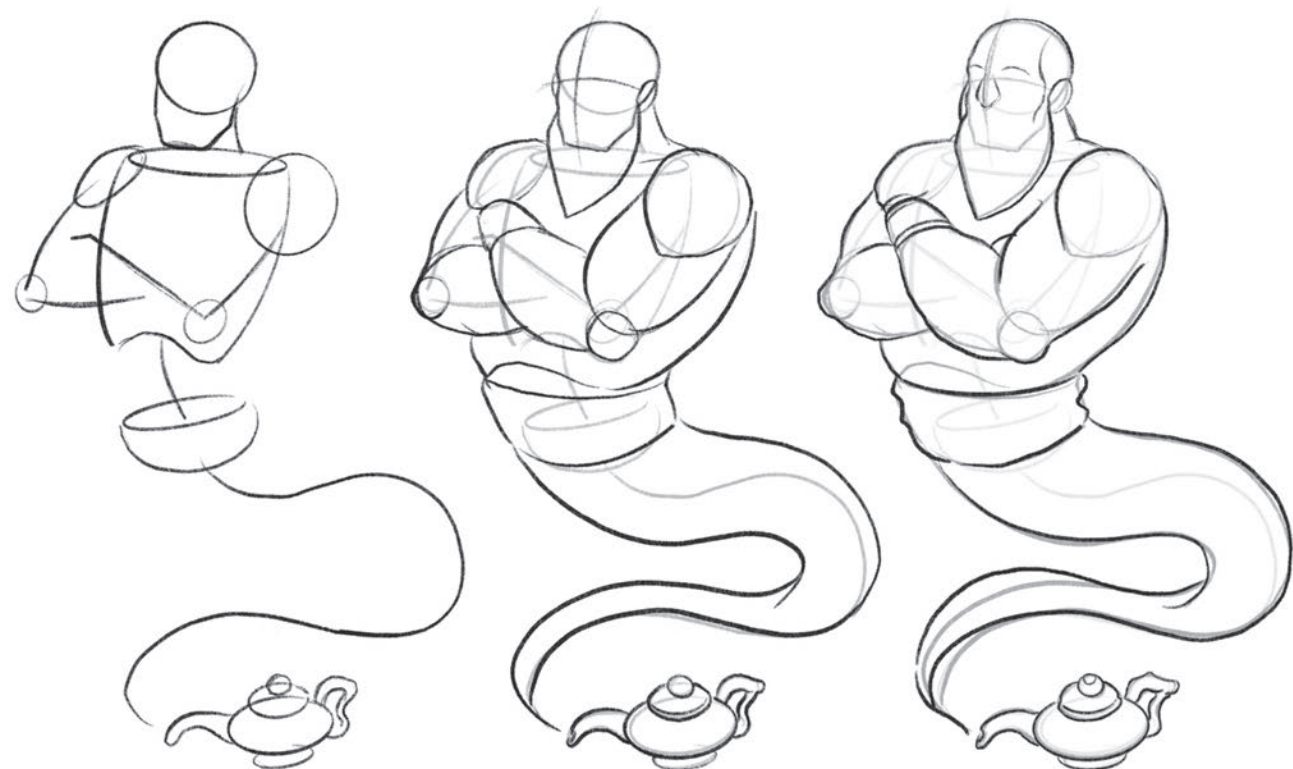


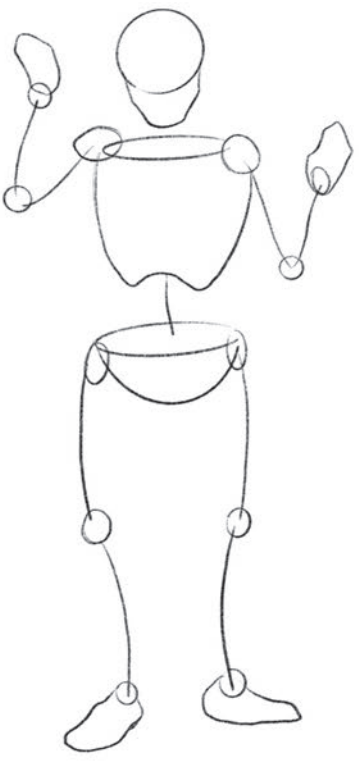


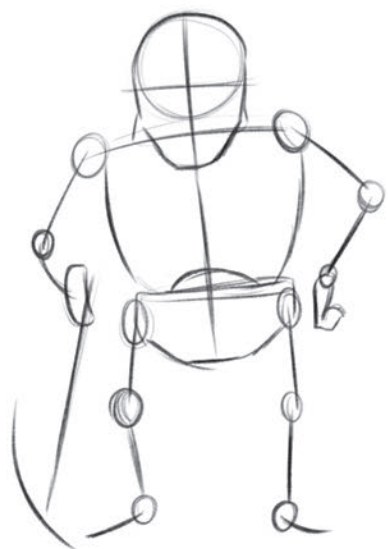




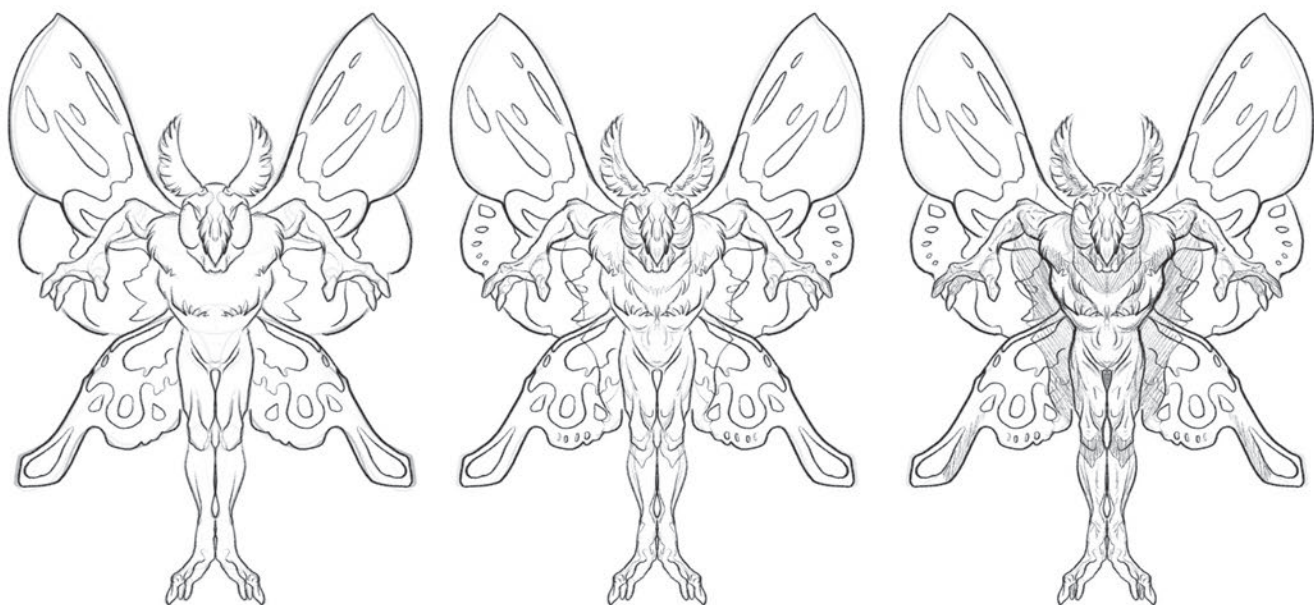
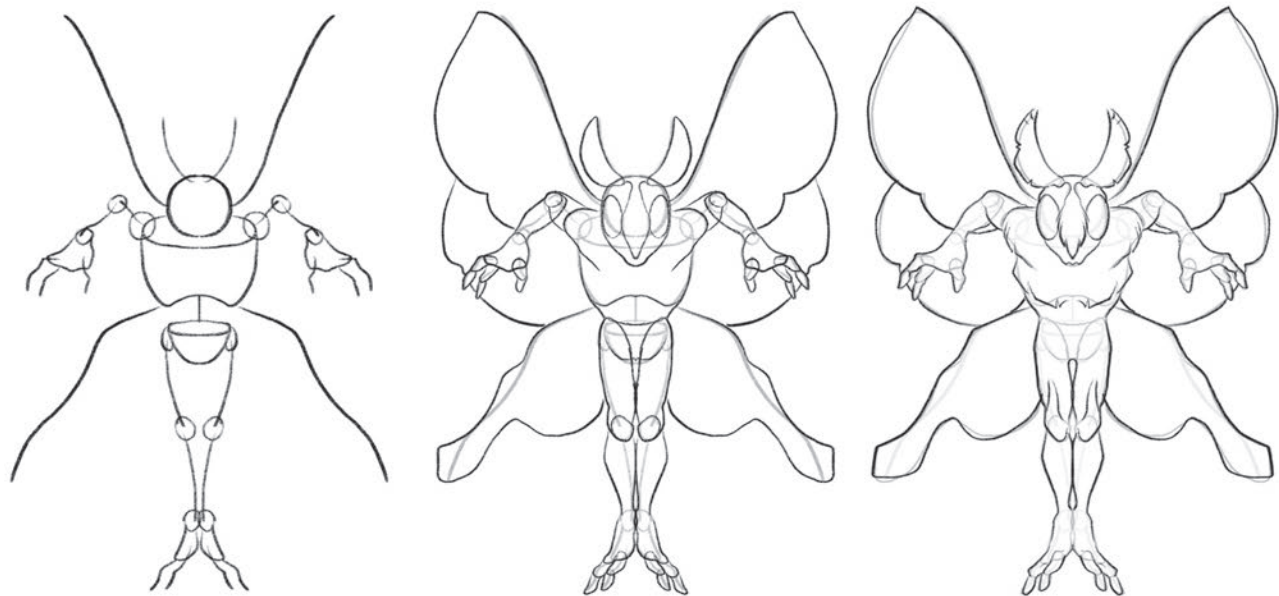


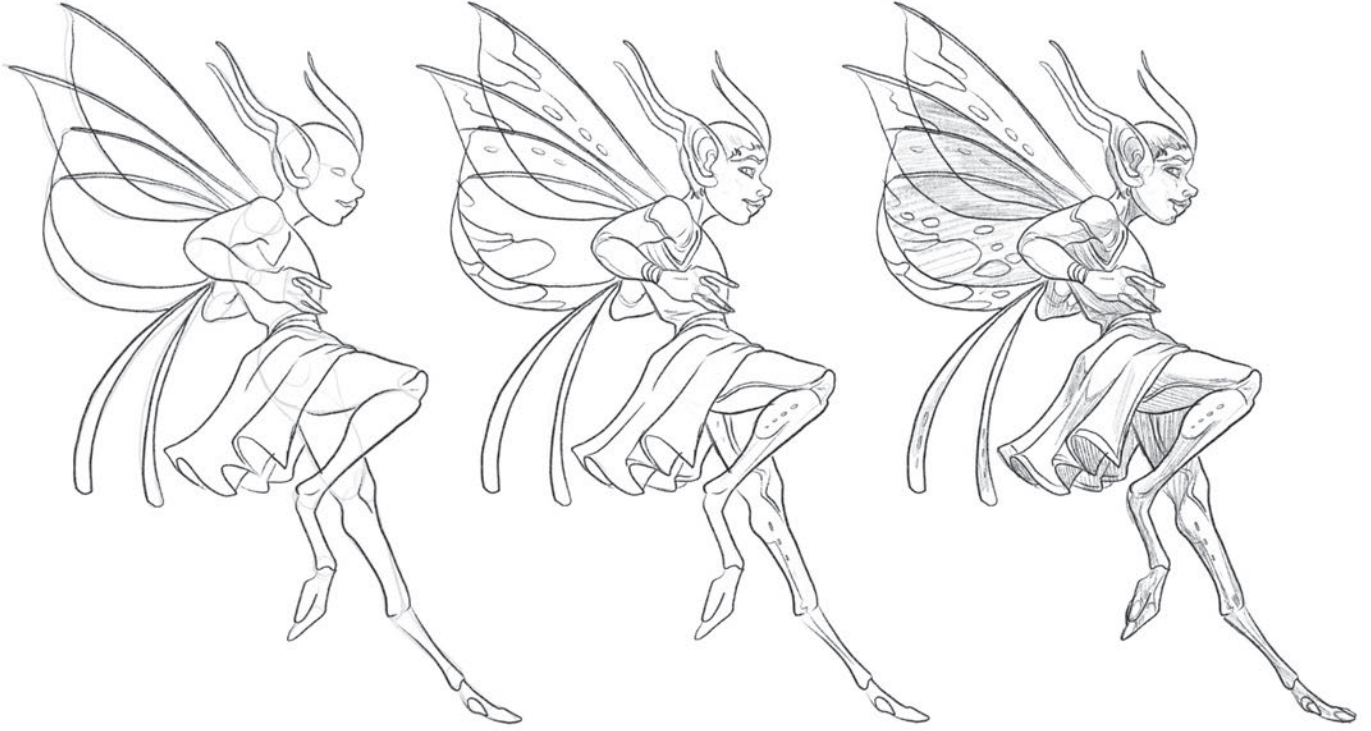
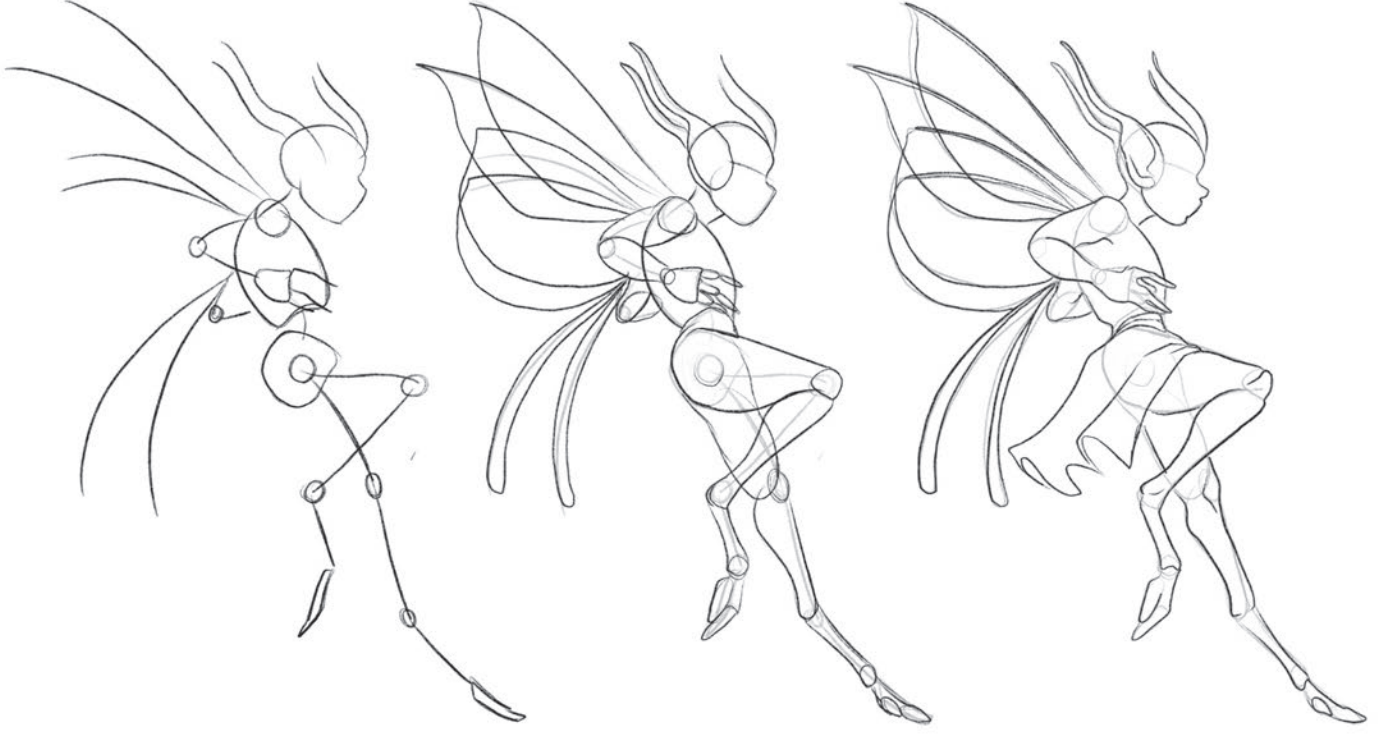


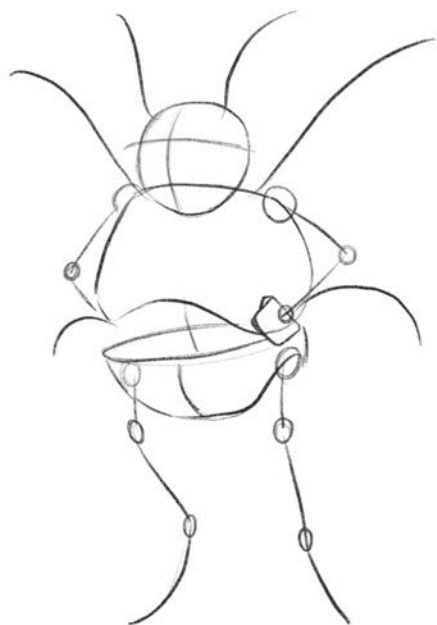


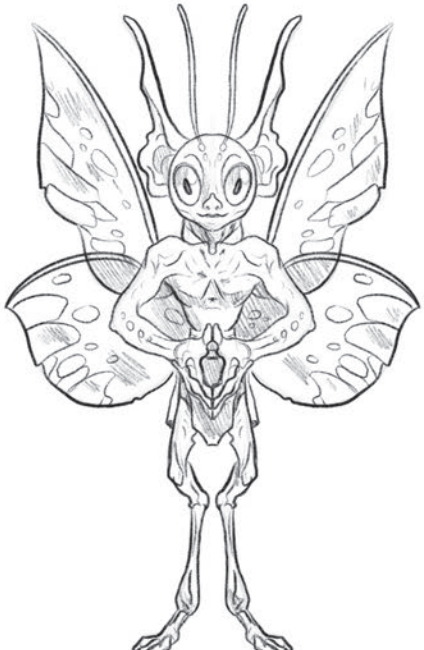
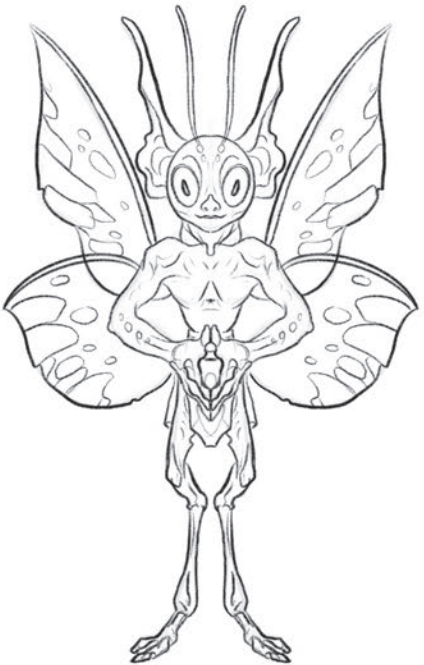
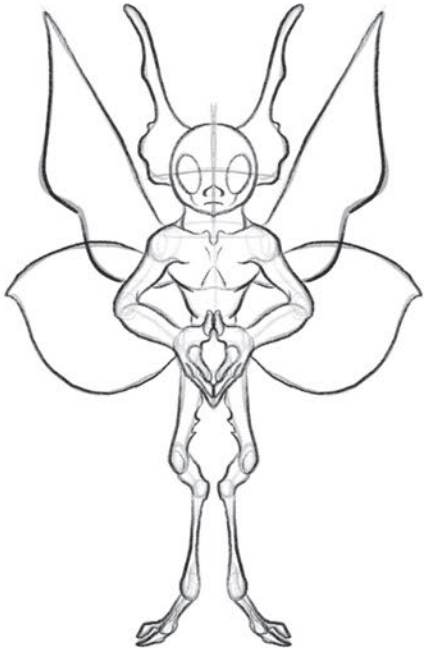
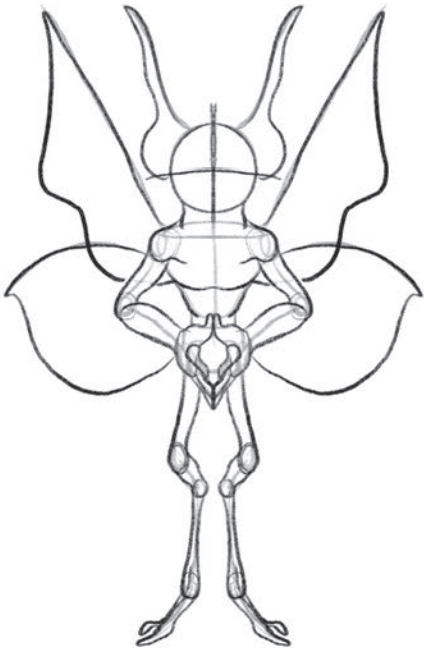
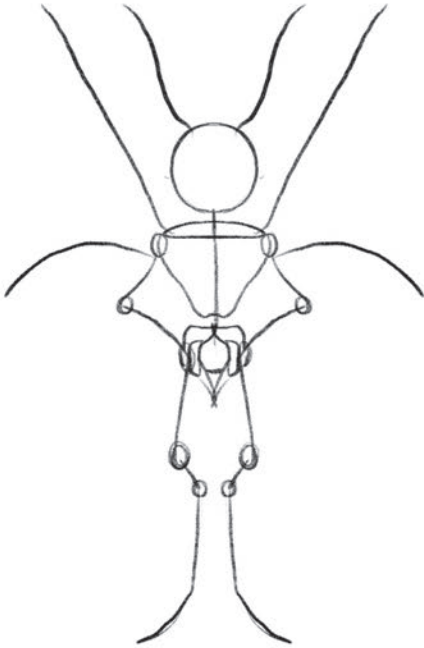






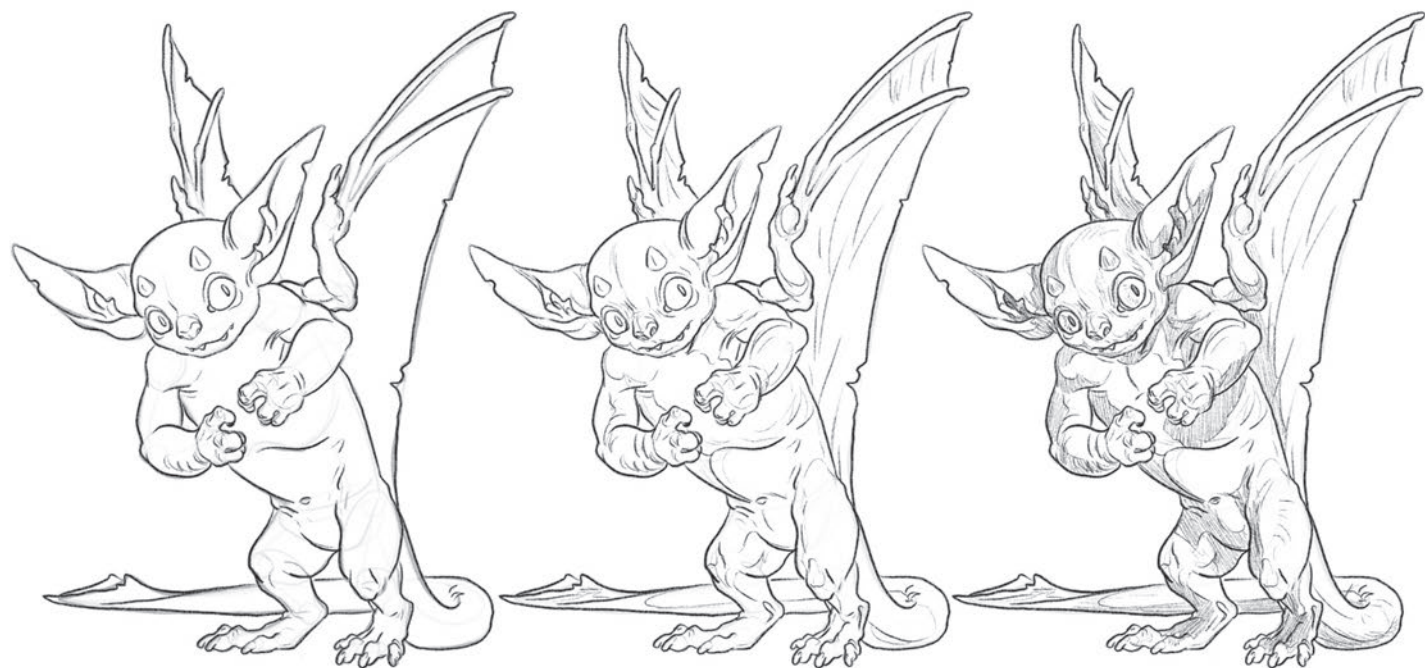
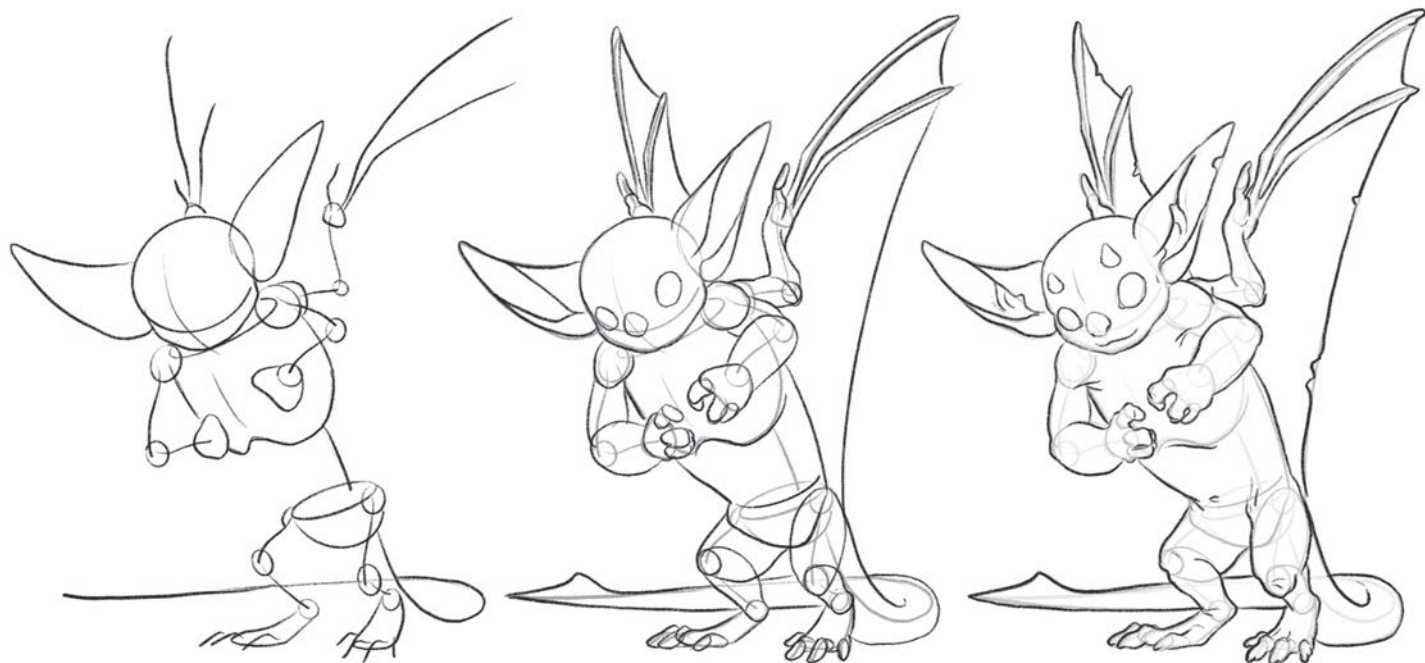


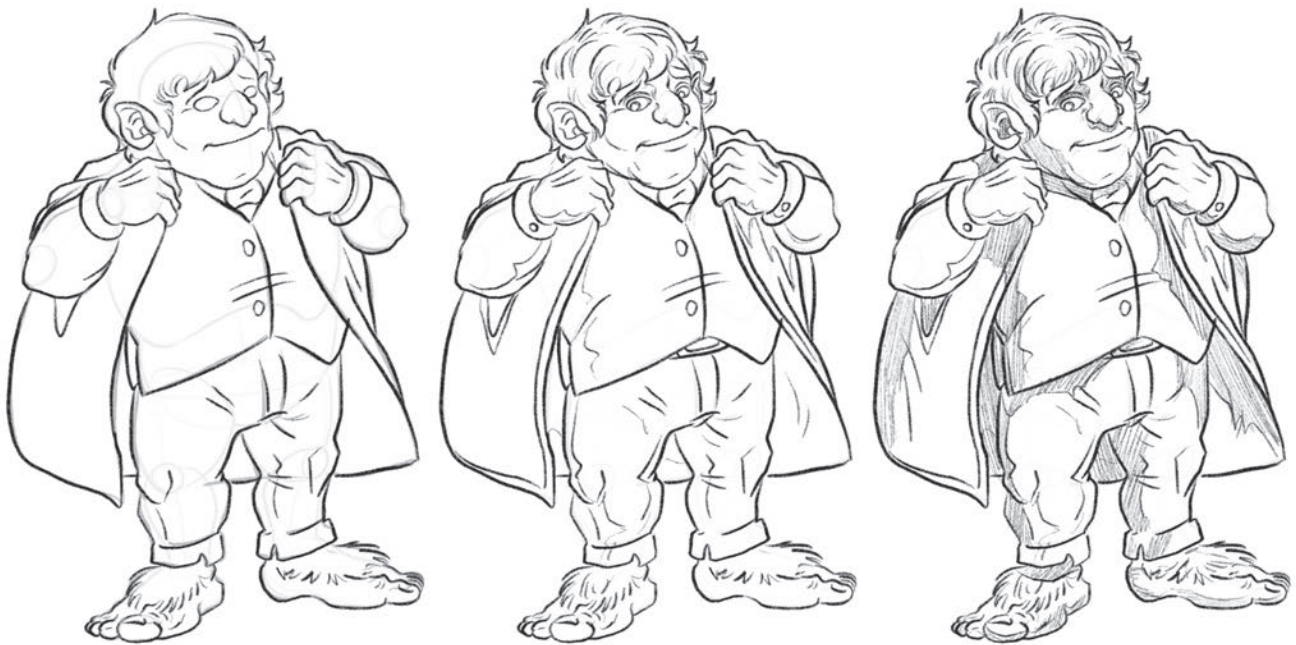
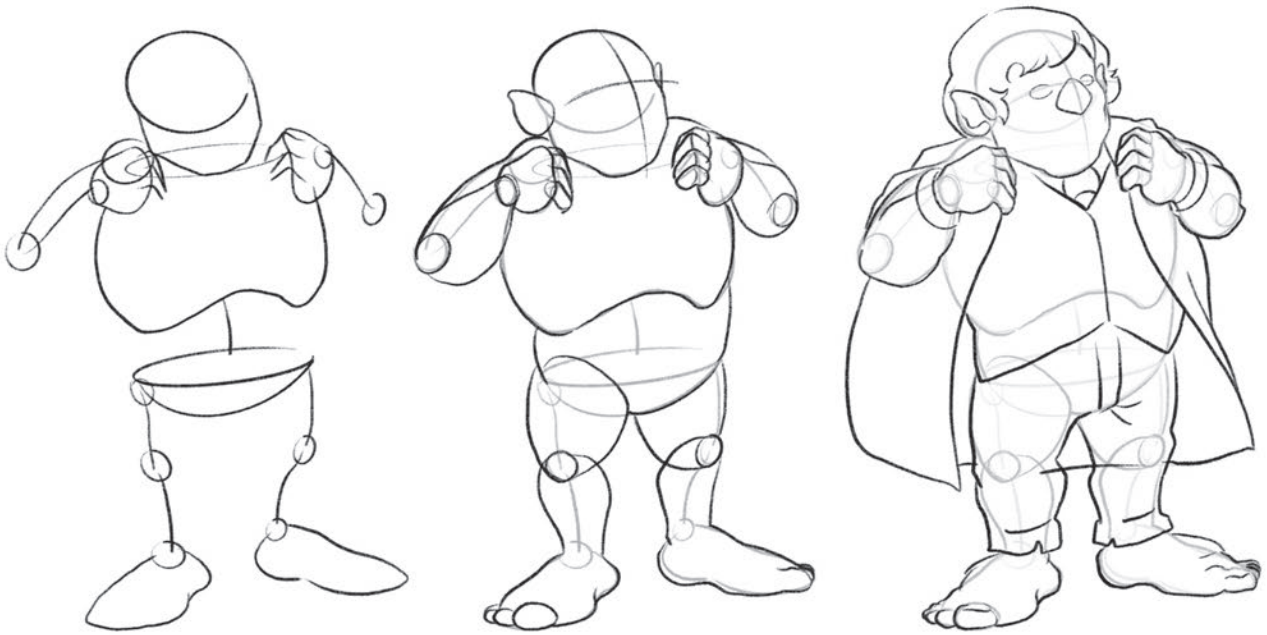


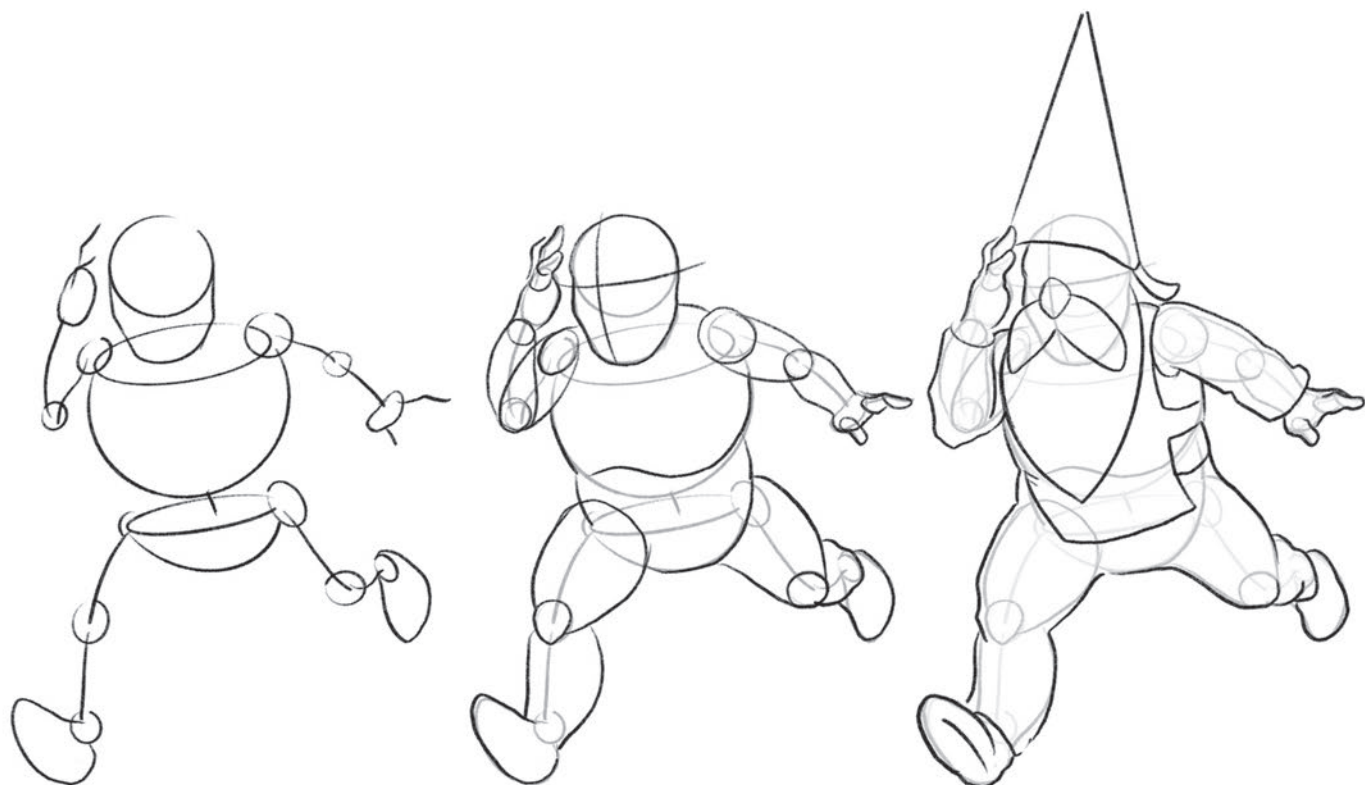




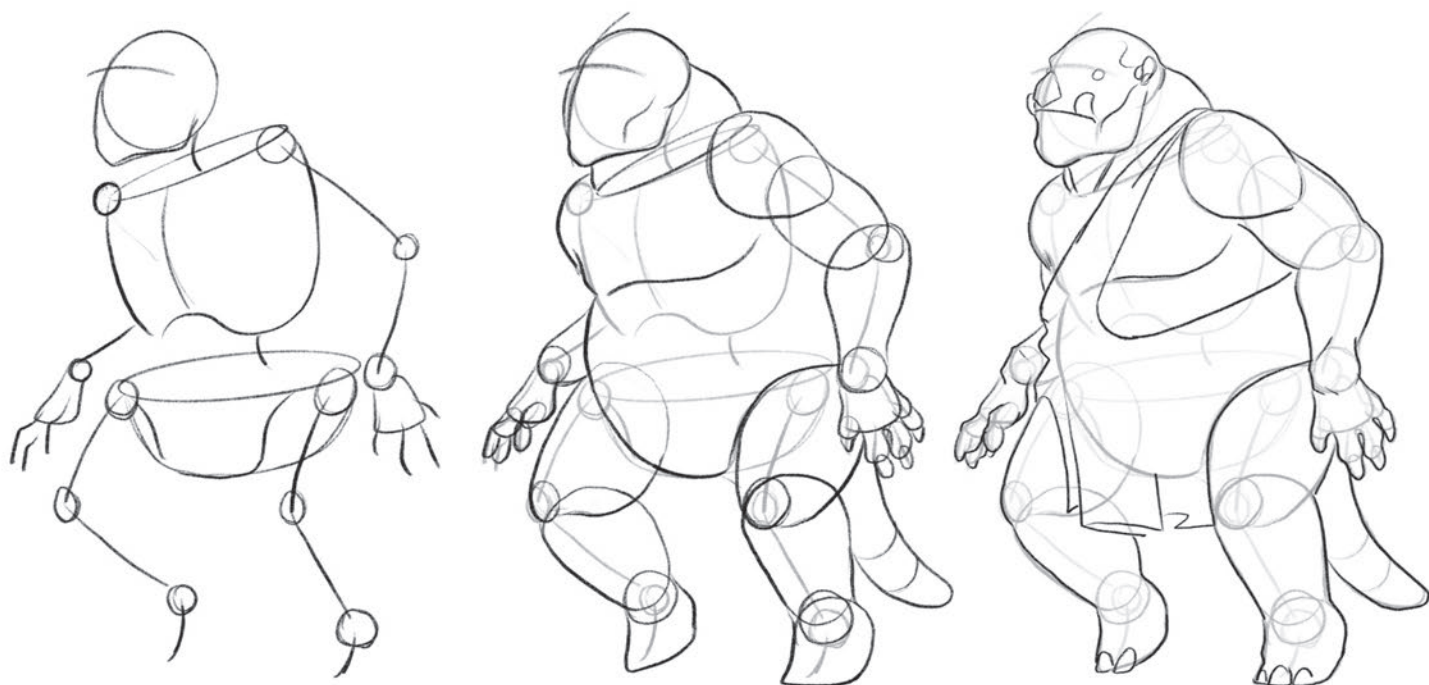








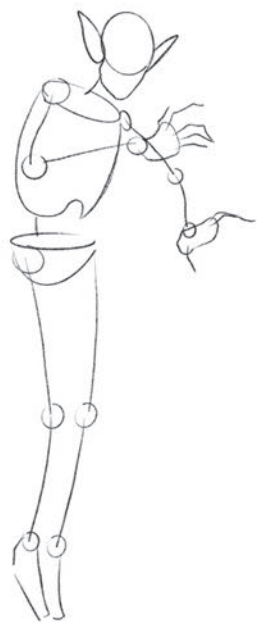


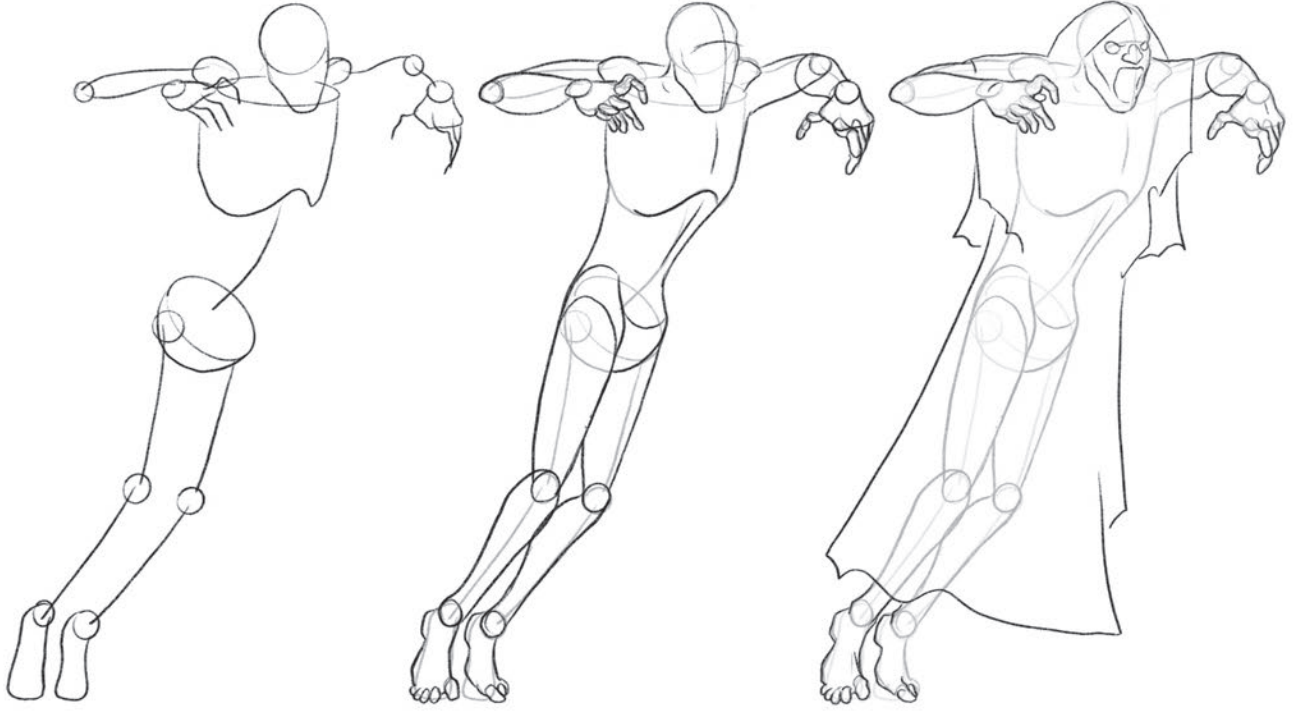


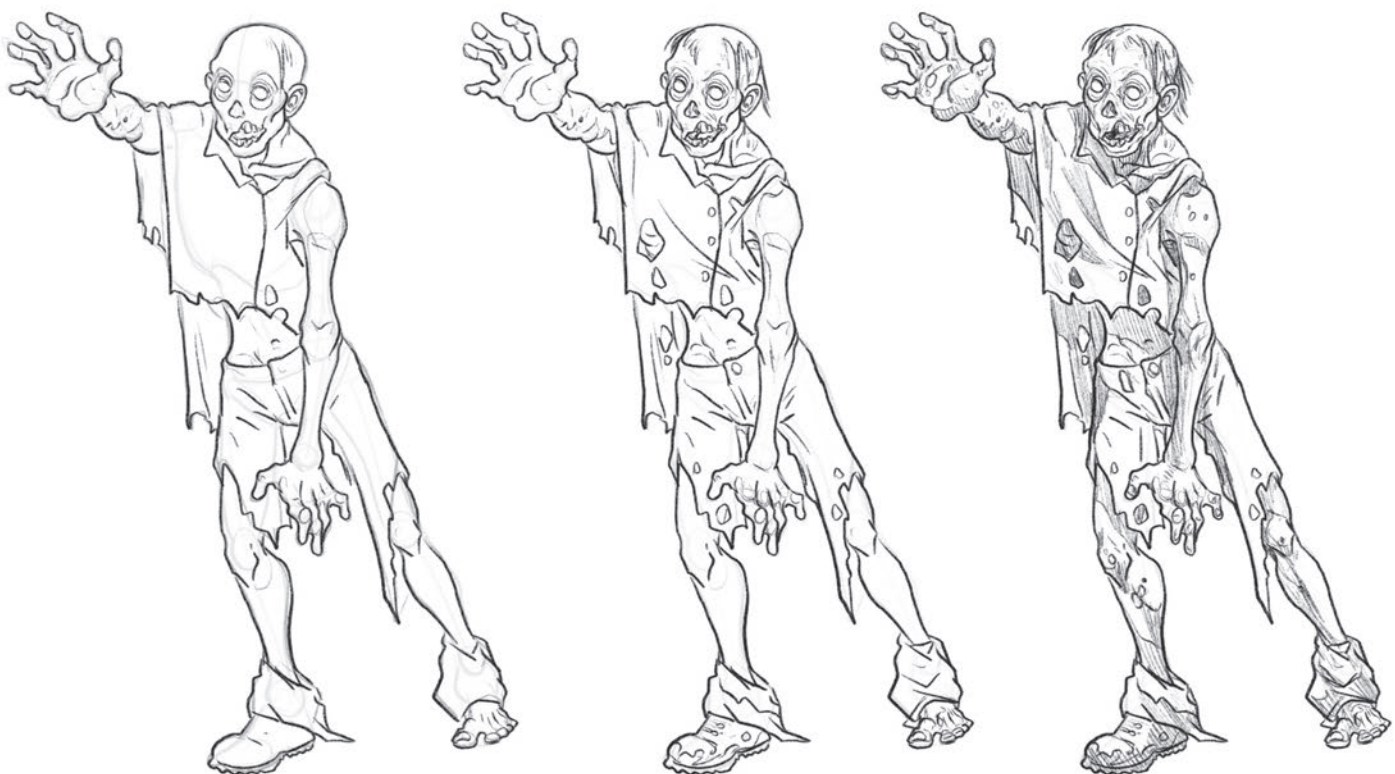
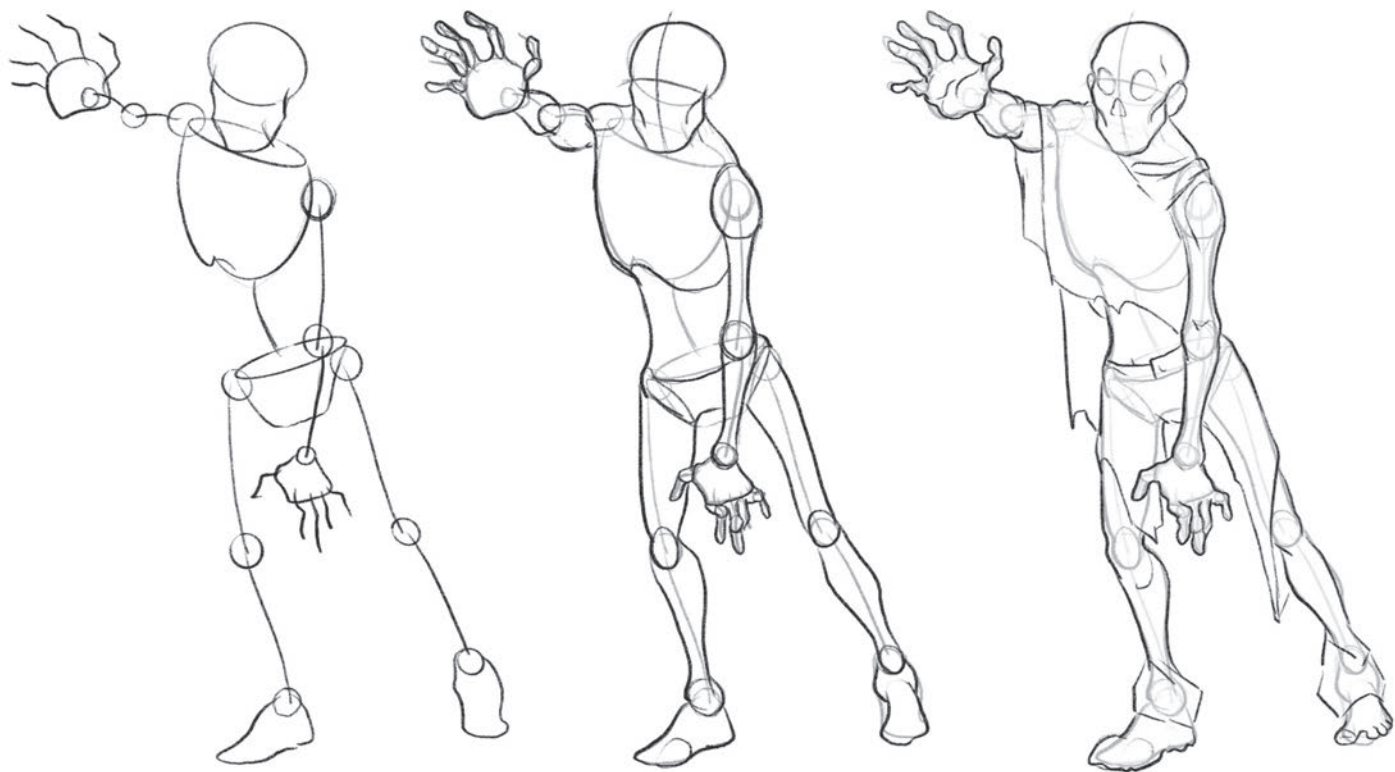


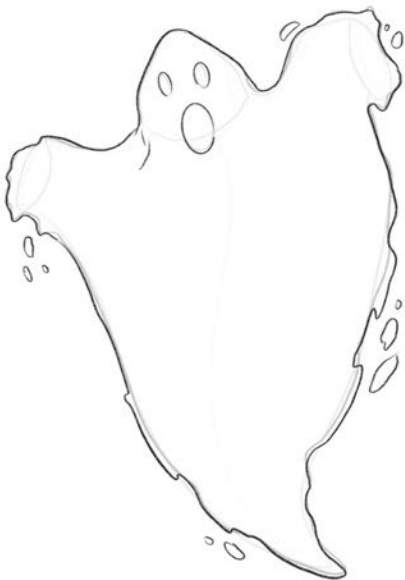
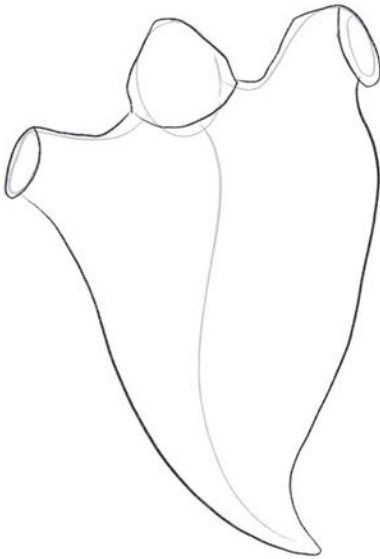
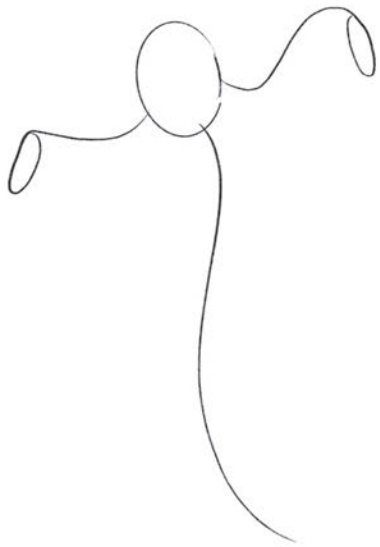


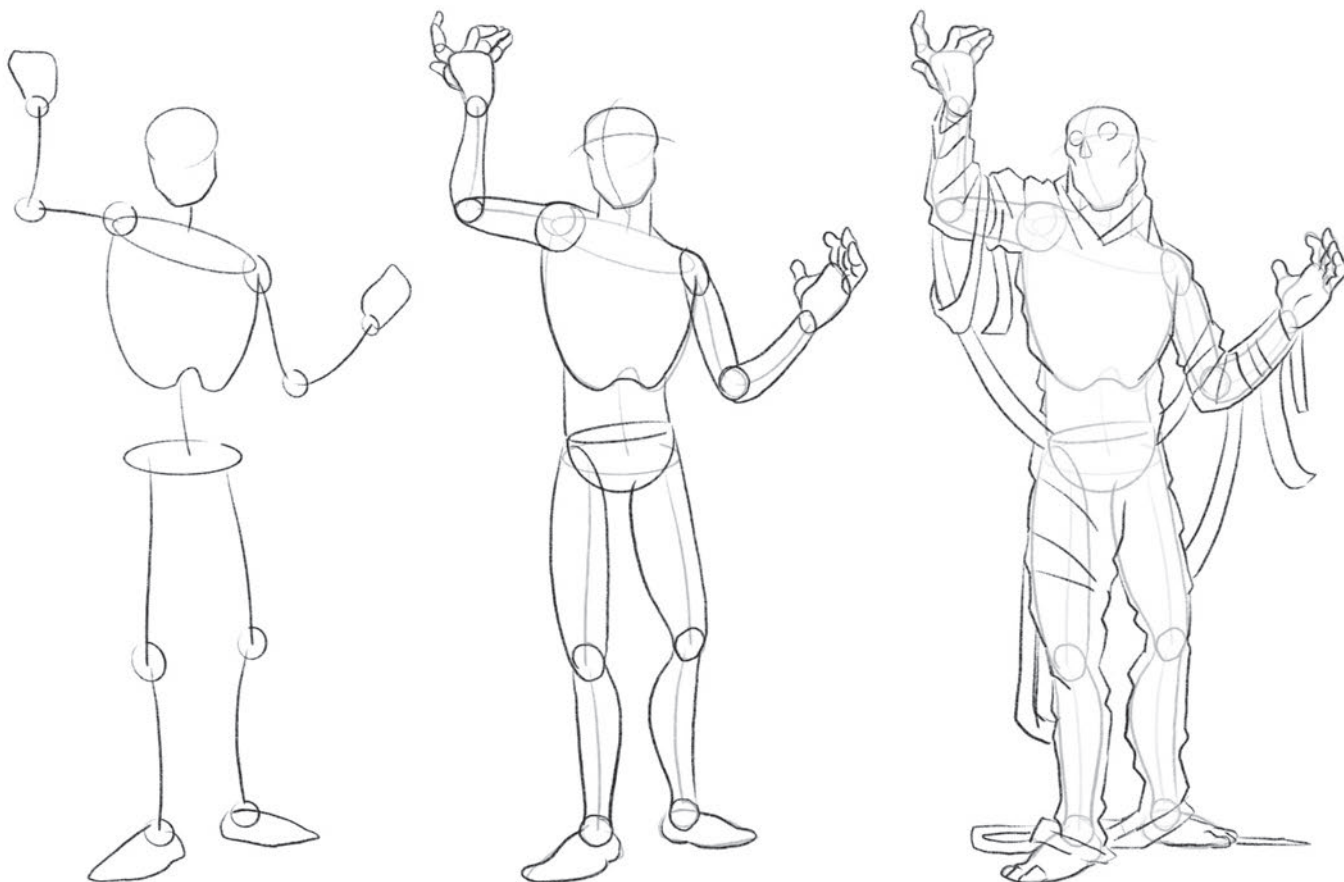


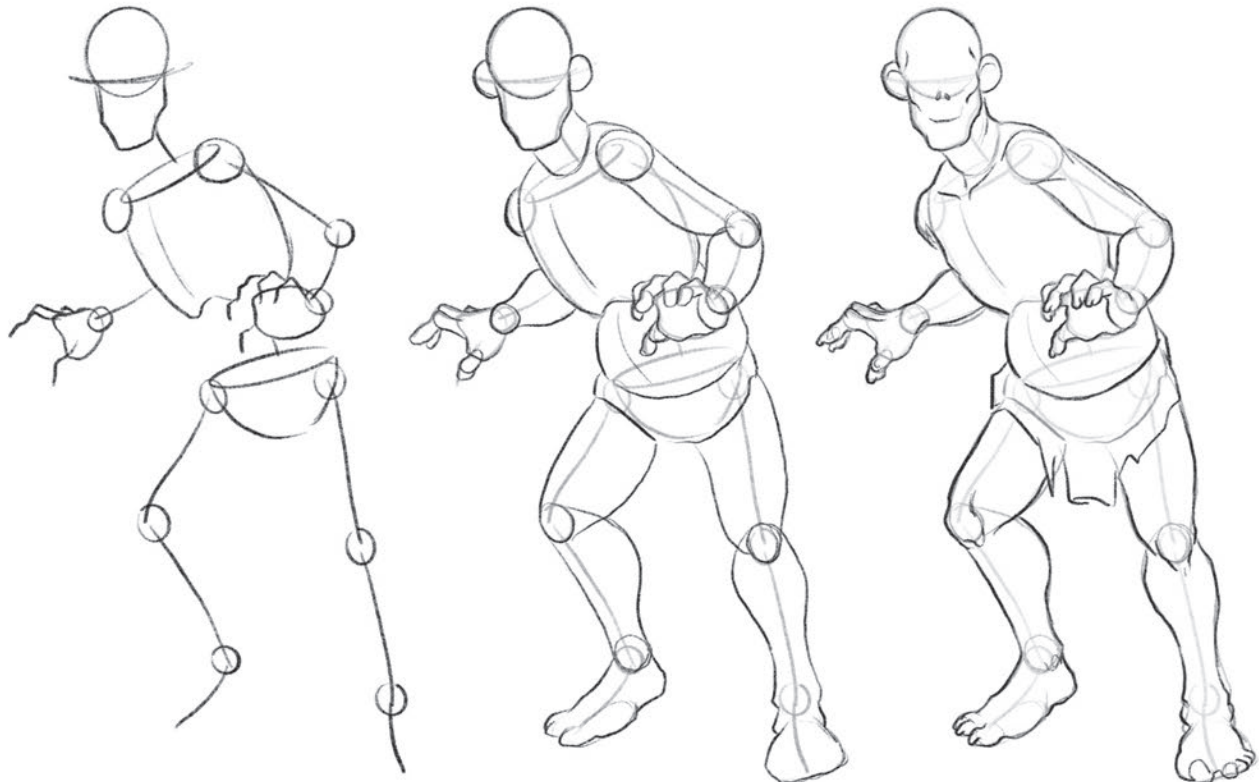


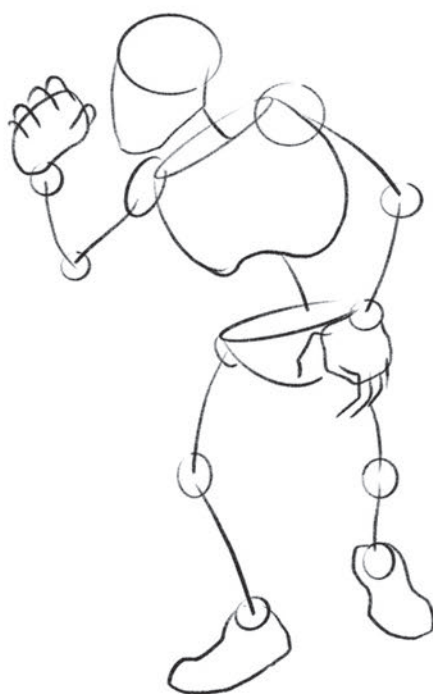


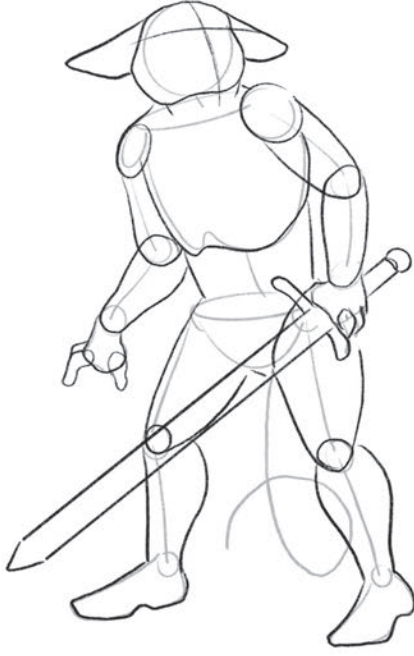
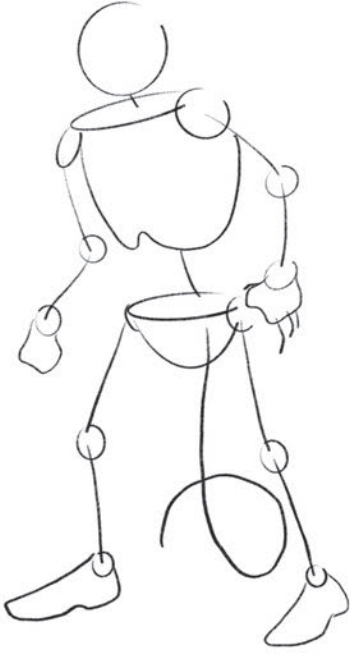


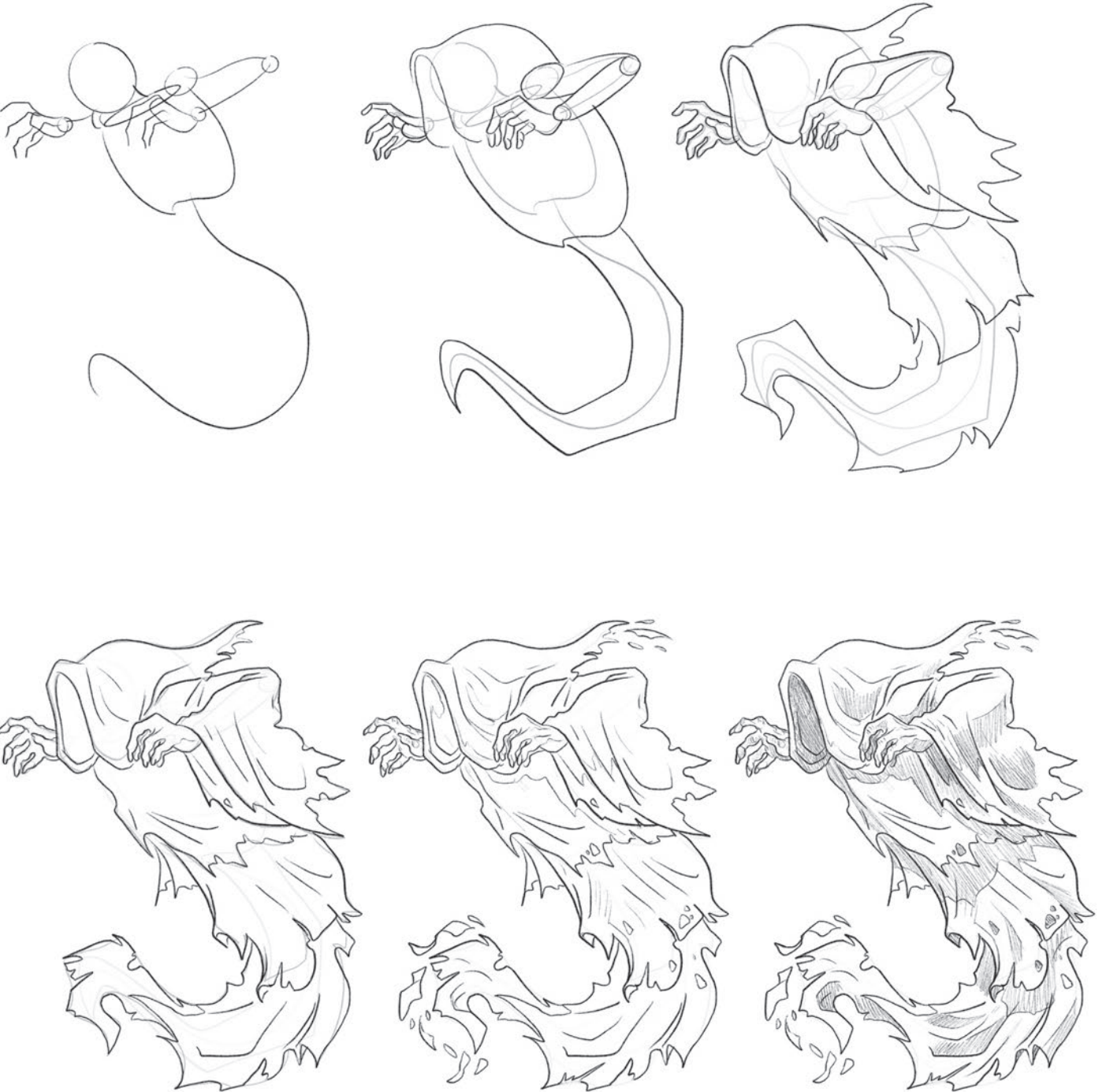






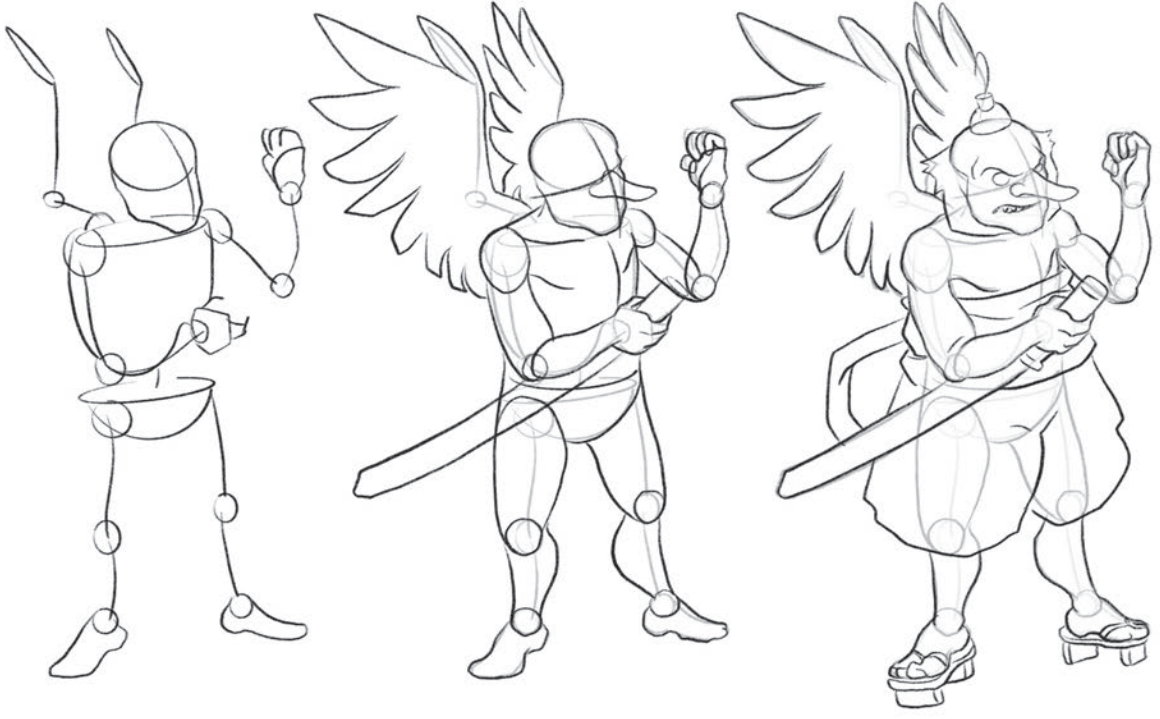


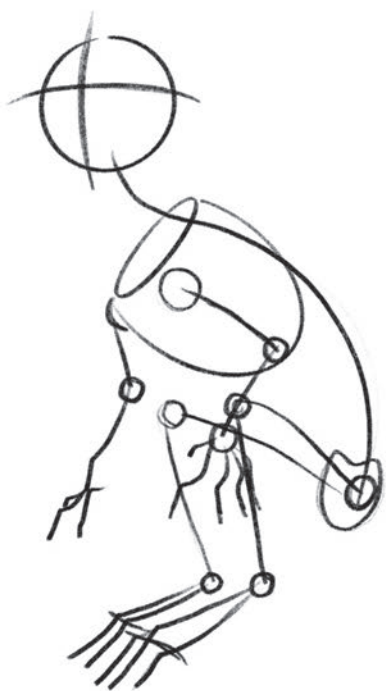




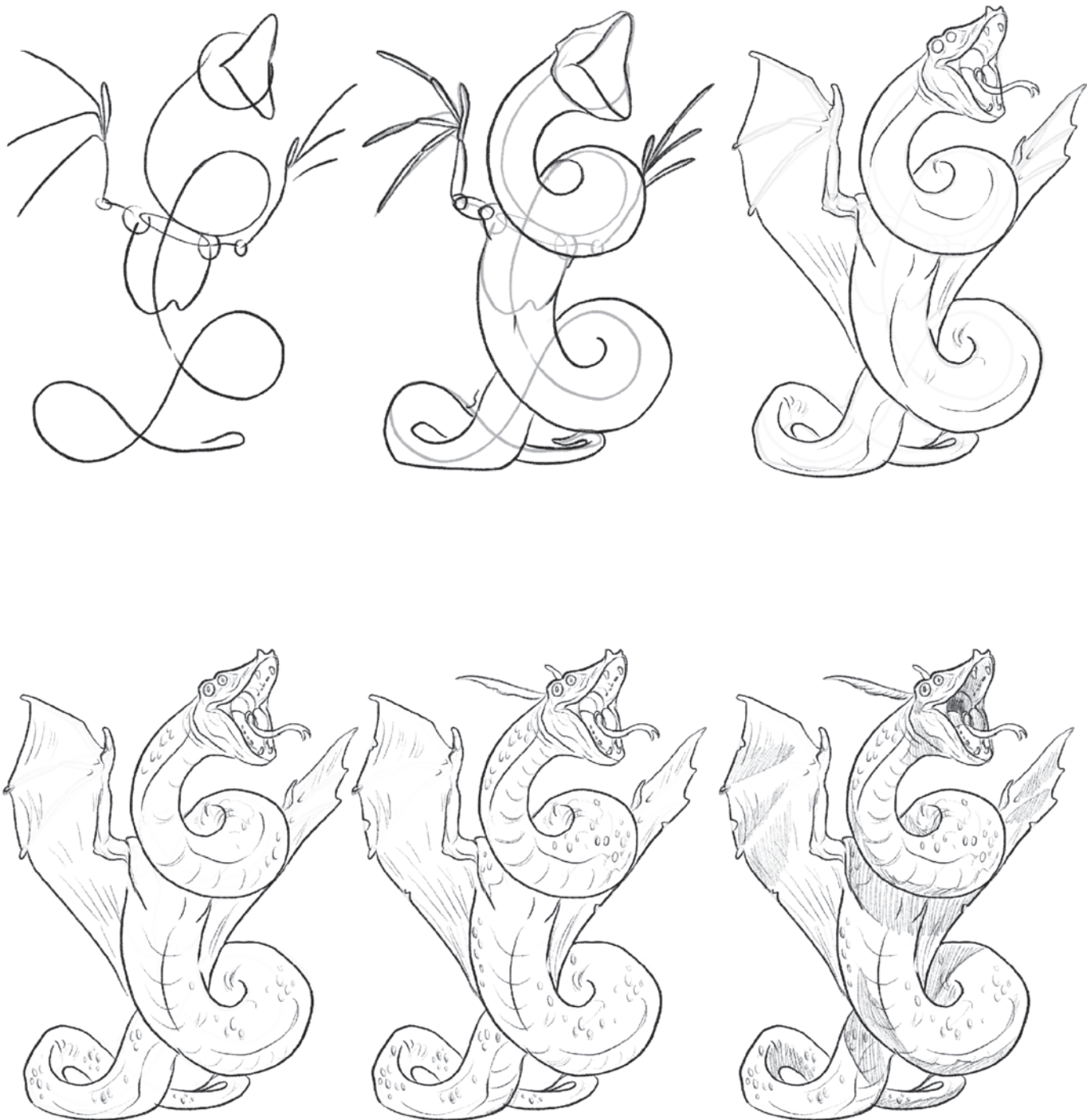






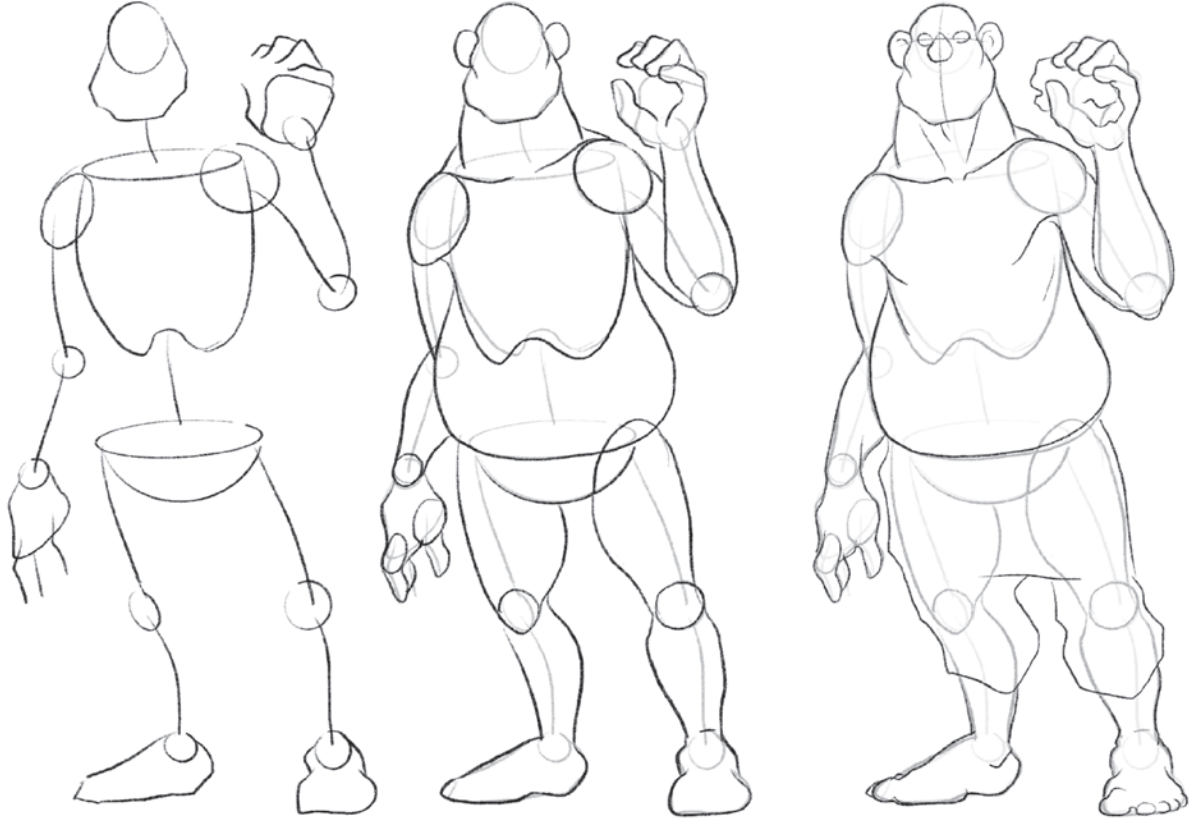


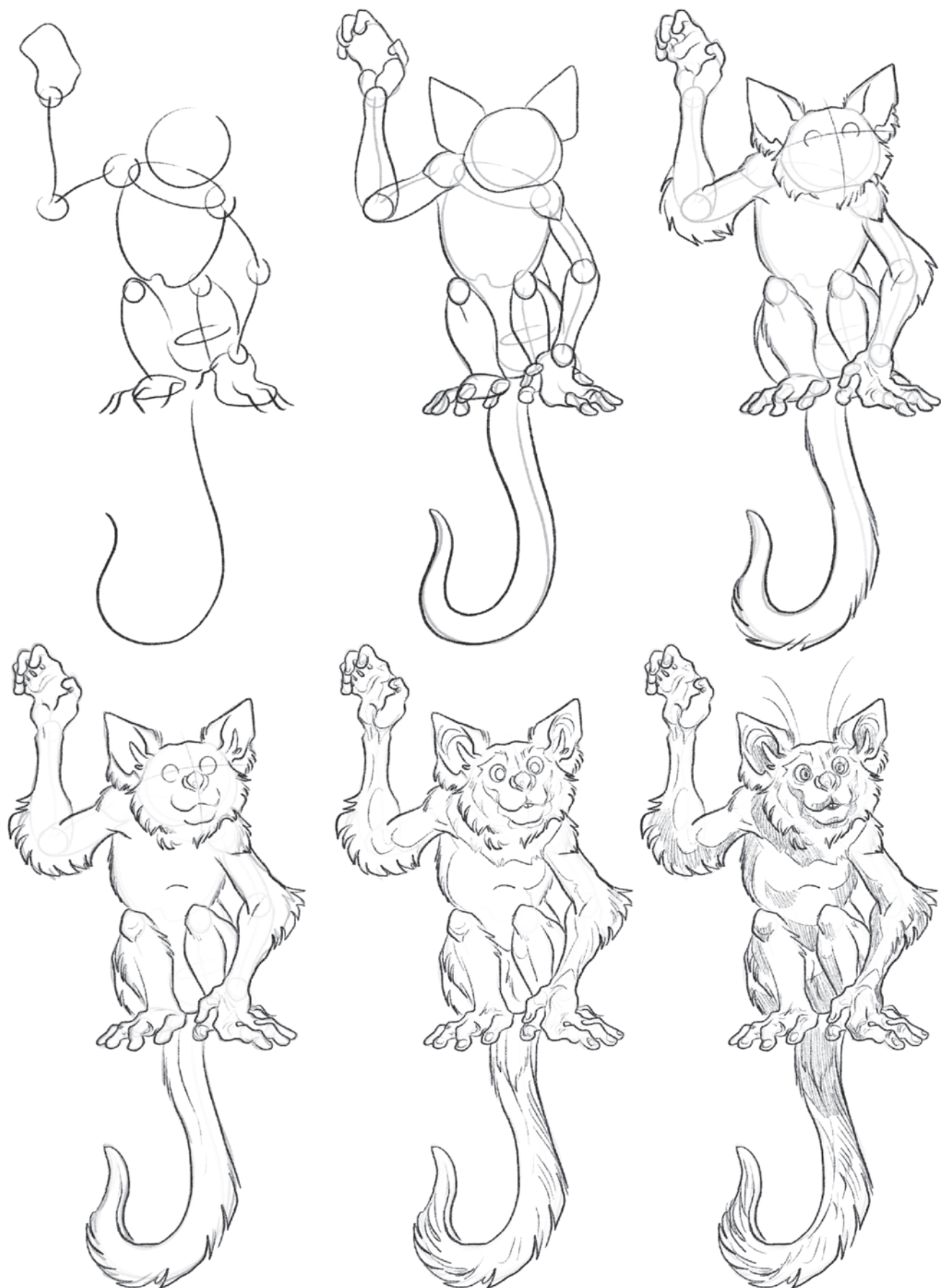


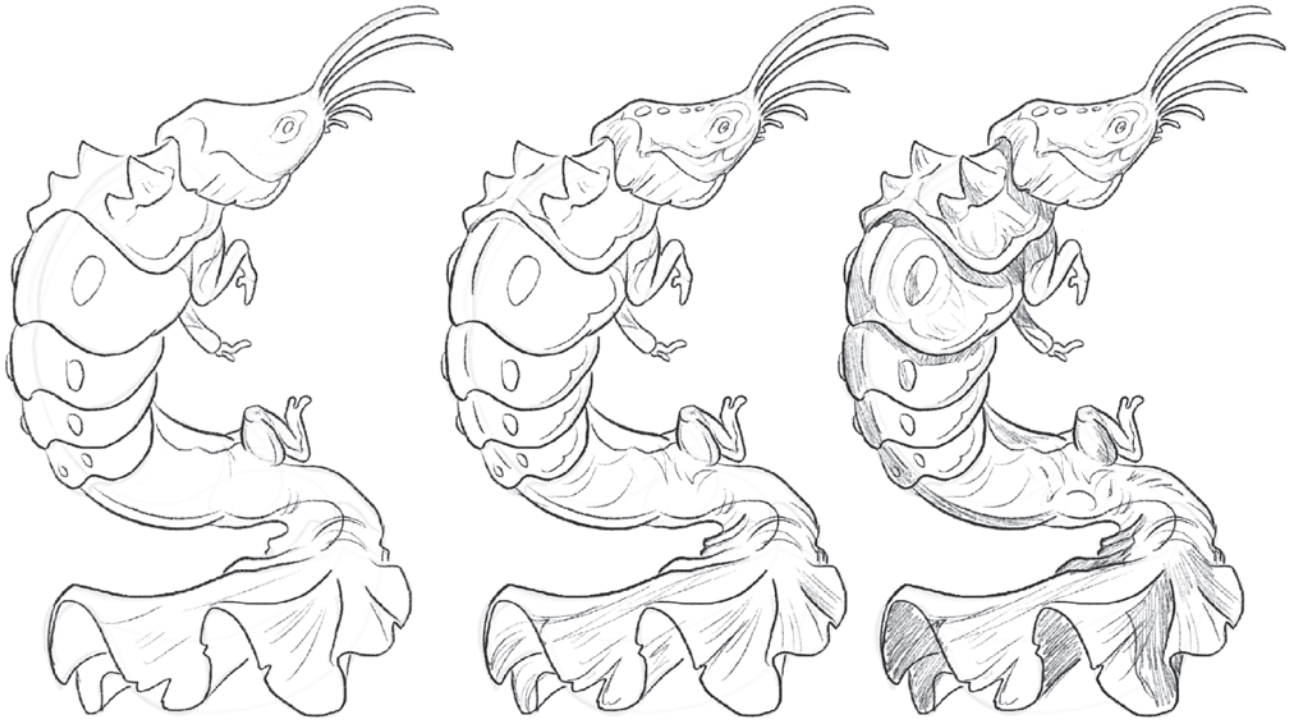
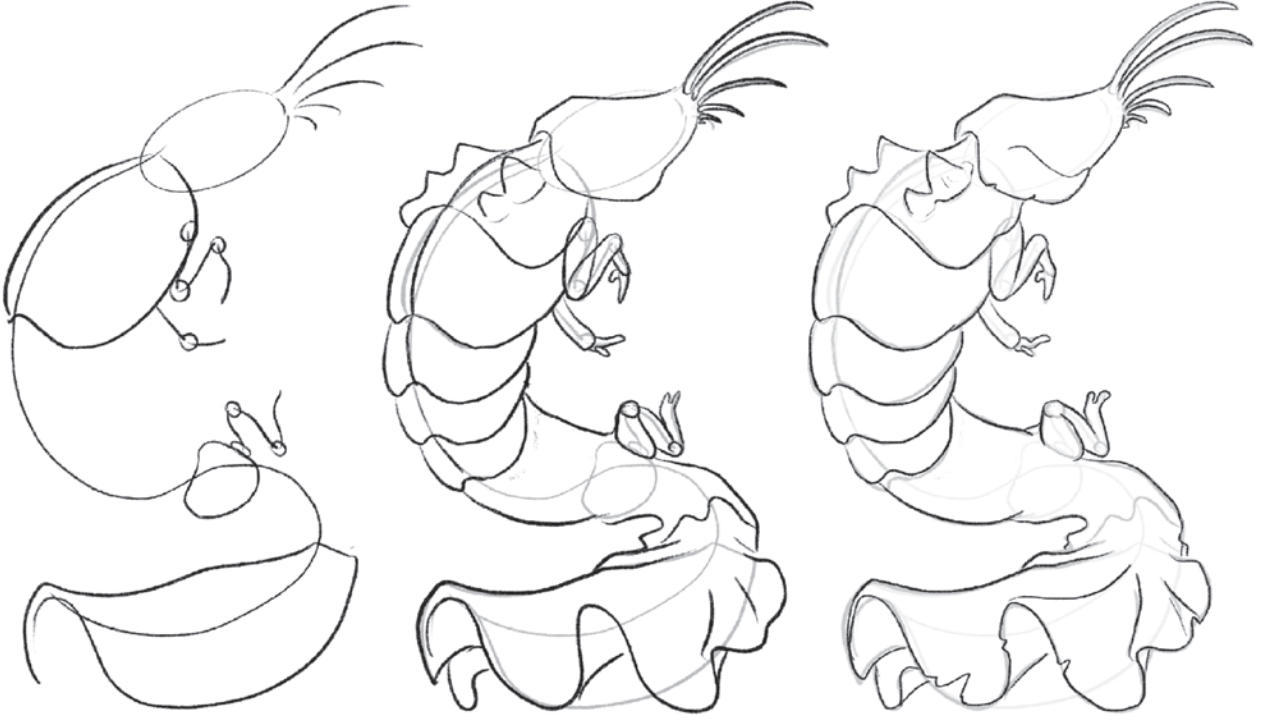


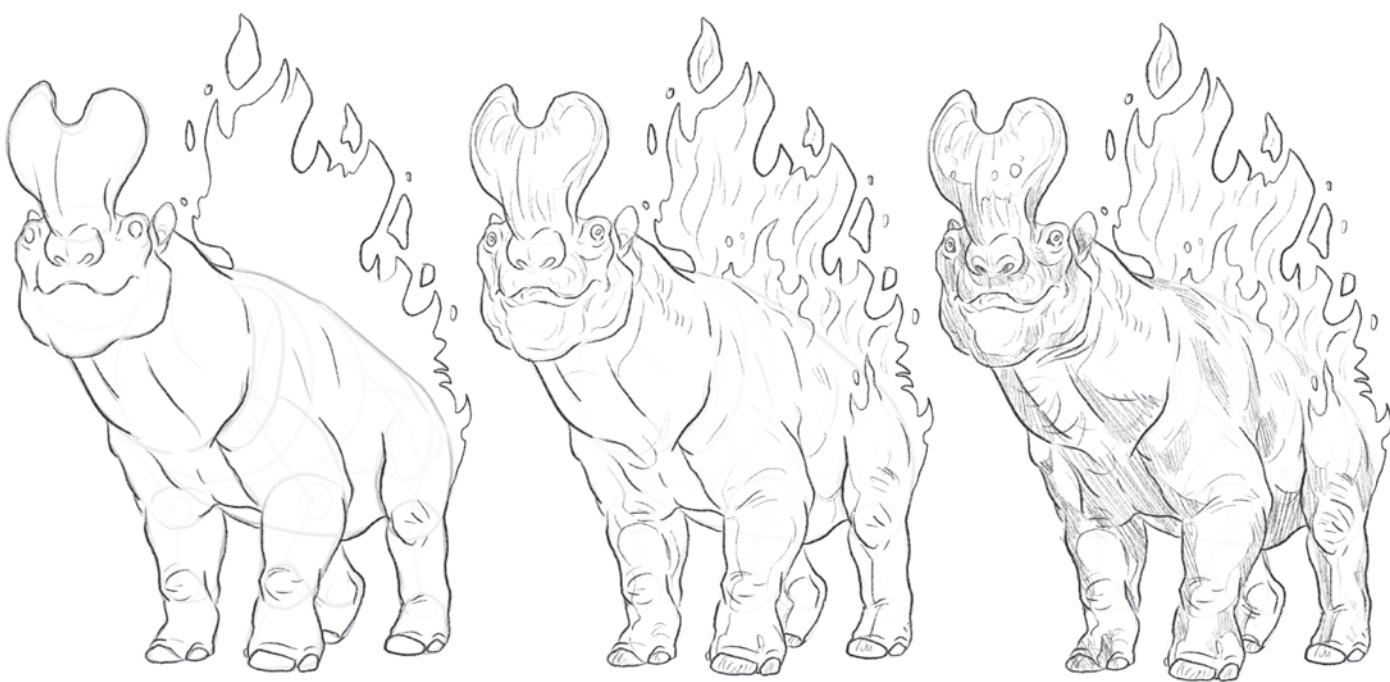
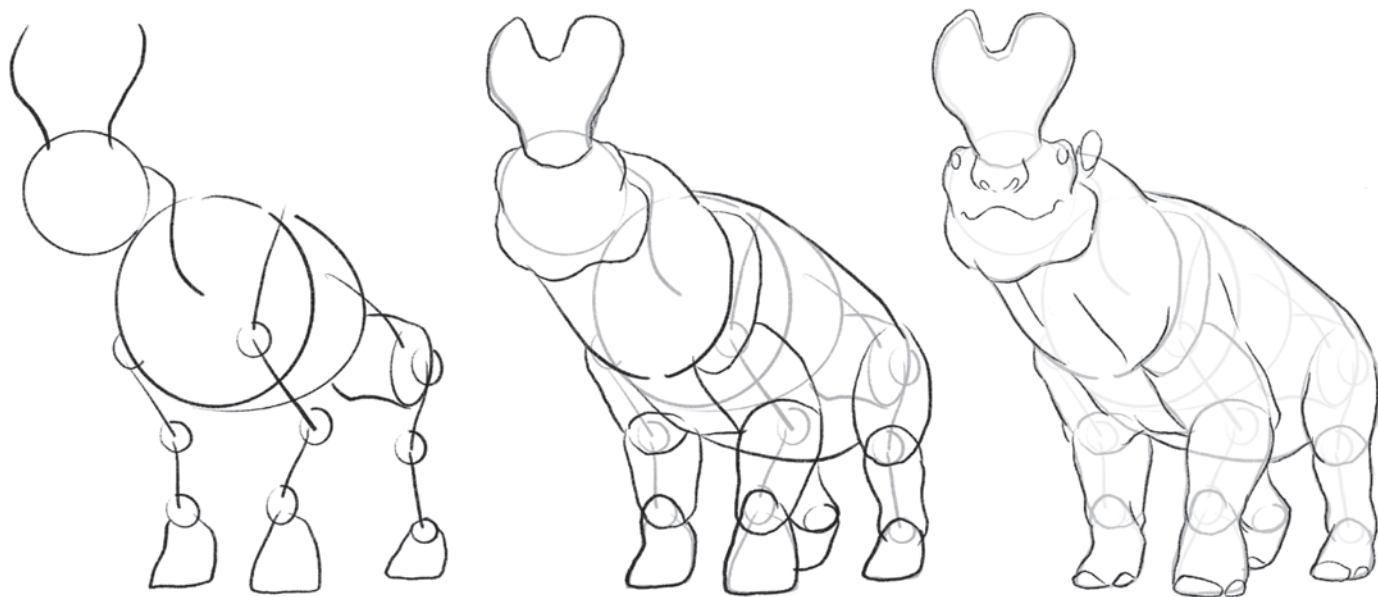


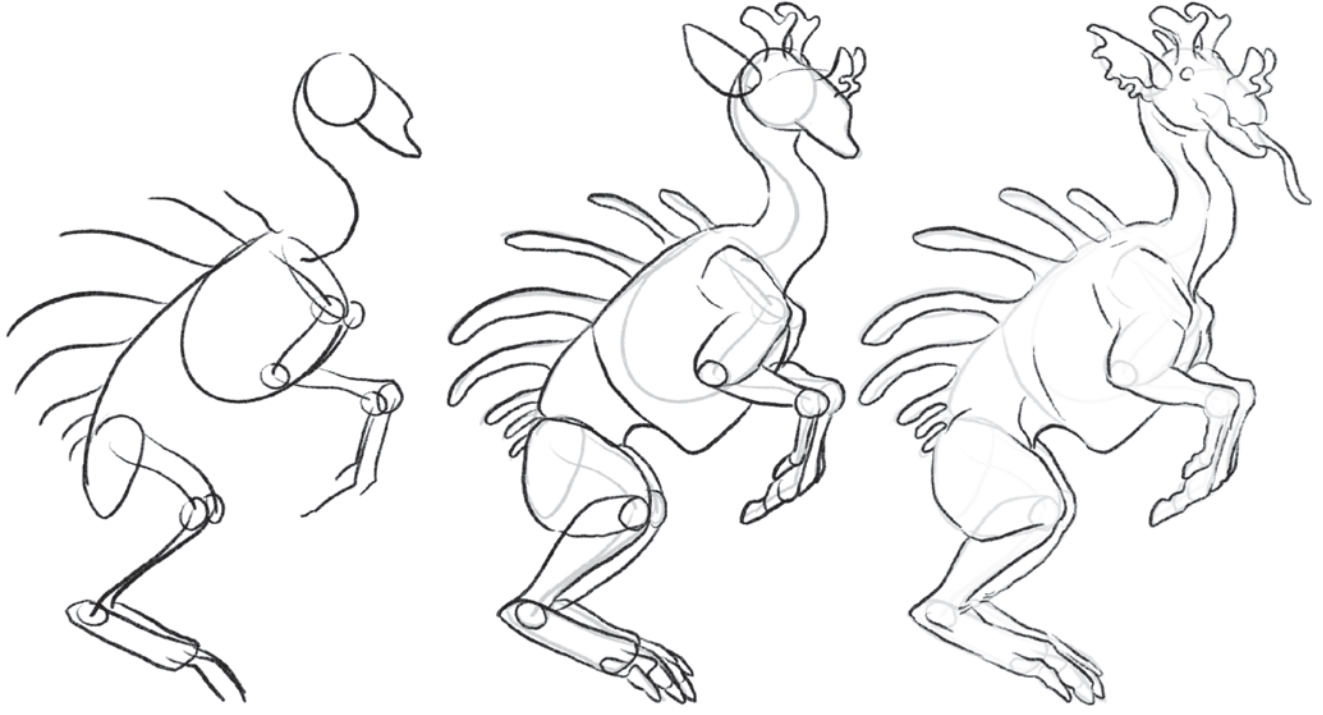














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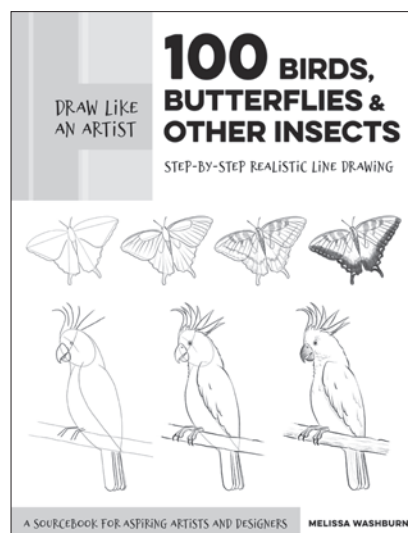
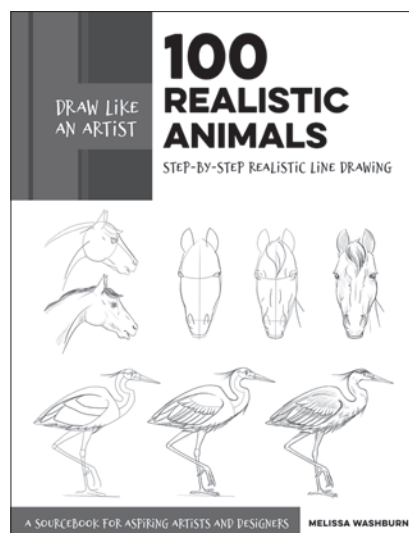
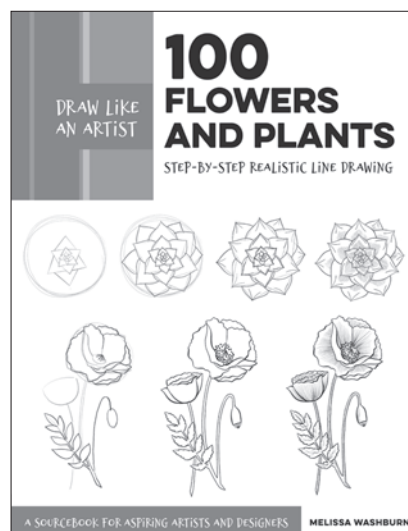
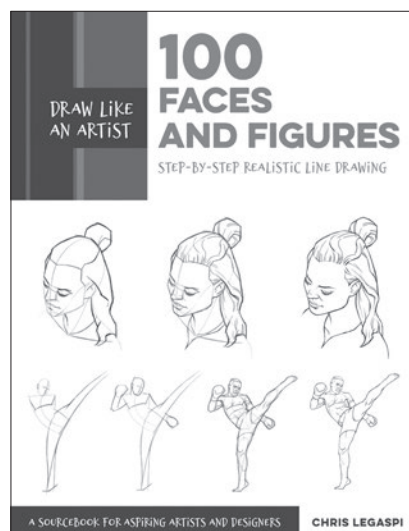
So much of art as a career relies on the support and encouragement from others. There are few of us who do this on their own. I wouldn't be where I am today without my family, friends, and colleagues who believed in what I could do. I would like to thank my family, both mine and my husband's, for always taking an interest in what I do. You all have supported me from the beginning and it's meant so much for my success. In particular, my parents and sisters: Thank you for your unending excitement and understanding for what I set out to do. To my friends: I have been so fortunate to have a group of friends that really lean in and nourish my soul and creative spirit. To my colleagues: Thank you for pushing me to be better. I strive to be something good for this industry. To my husband, John: Thank you for your unwavering belief in me. You've never doubted me in any of this; you've always helped me through deadlines, long hours, and times of stress. You are my co-pilot. Thank you, dear.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brynn Metheney is a concept artist specializing in creature and character designs for film, games, and publishing. Her clients include Sony Pictures, Dark Horse Comics, Disney Publishing, Dreamscape Immersive, Warner Bros., and Wizards of the Coasts, and she has been involved with such projects as Luc Besson's *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets*, Warner Bros.'s *Scooby-Doo*, and Boots Riley's *Sorry to Bother You*. Brynn also teaches creature design at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, California, and The Animation Workshop in Viborg, Denmark. She lives in the greater Los Angeles area.



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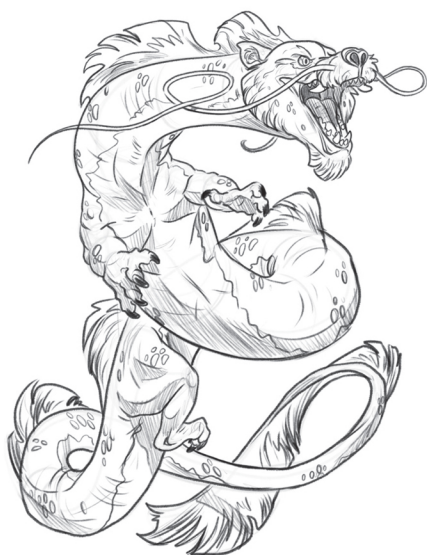


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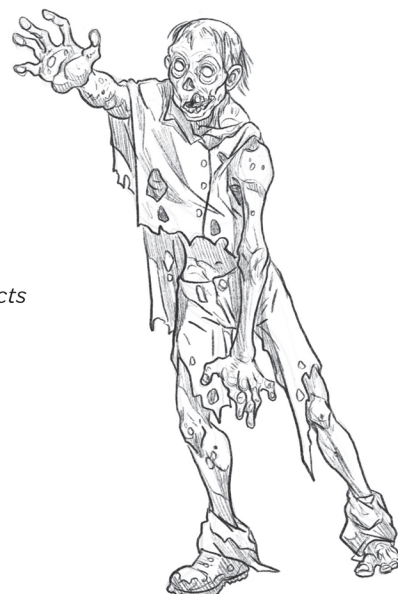


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